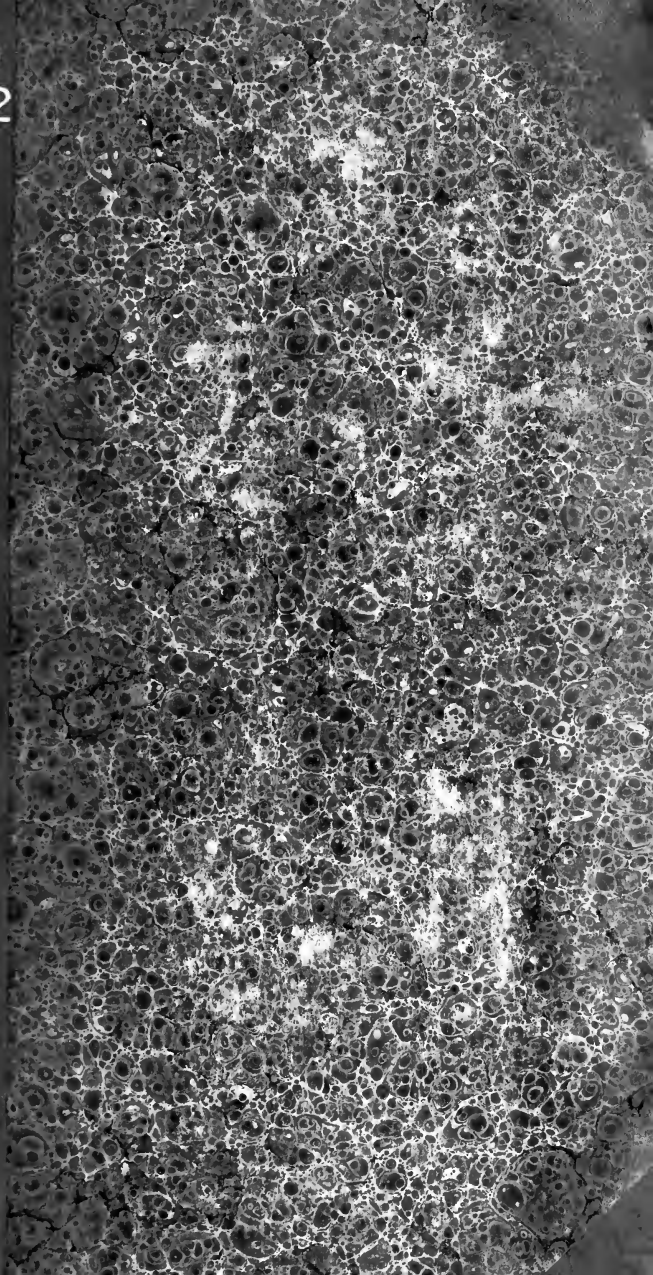


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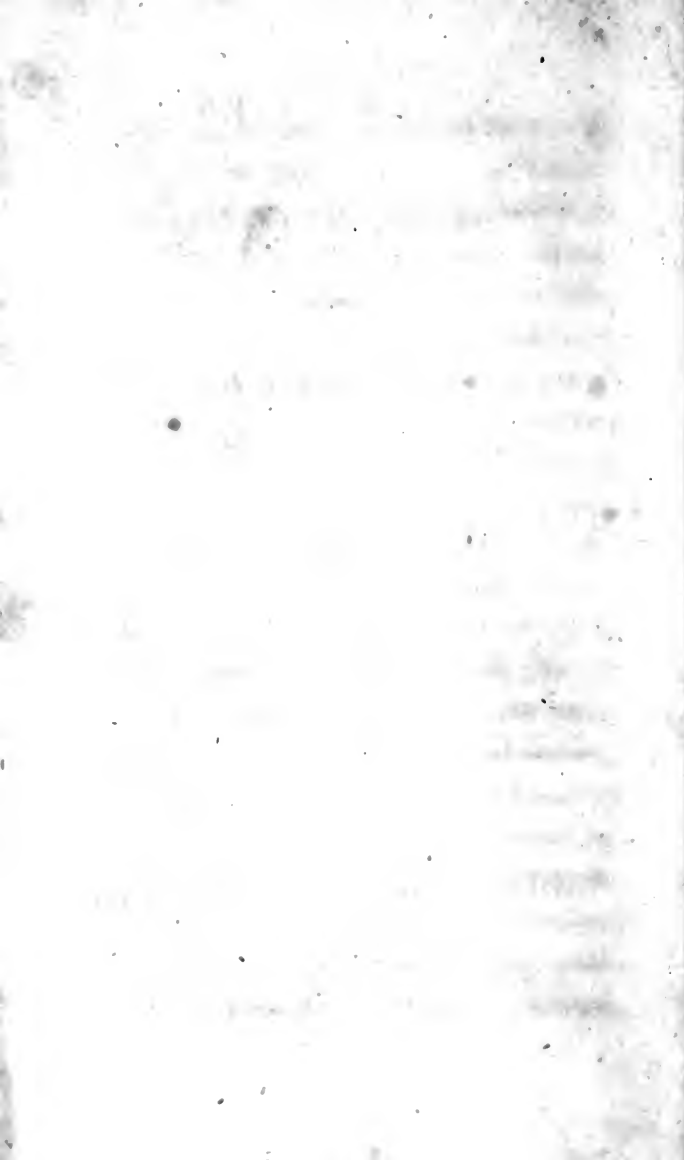
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Varities







VARIETIES
IN
W O M A N.



A NOVEL,
IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

“ Howsoever, it is a kind of policy in these days, to prefix a phantastical title to a book which is to be sold ; for as larks come down to a day-net, many vain readers will tarry and stand gazing like silly passengers at an antique picture in a Painter's shop, that will not look a judicious piece.

BURTON.”

L O N D O N :
PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY
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vi 1

VARIETIES IN WOMAN.

CHAPTER I.

TO MY SON ALBERT.

Gen Res Ray 24 Aug 53 Pickering 3v.
IN choosing to address you, my dear Albert, in this manner,—to speak to you when I have no longer the power of utterance,—to project plans for your future welfare, when the possibility of my witnessing their realization is completely withdrawn,—I am not influenced by the desire of working on your mind whilst it is enfeebled, perhaps, by sorrow for my loss. I wish not to extort from you any rash vow of yielding implicit

VOL. I. B

credence to my observations. I bequeath to you the most valuable legacy in my power,—the fruits of my own experience. You have equal capacity of judging what mode of life is best adapted to you, as I had;—you are the same free agent, the same accountable being. I am not now going to depart from that maxim which has invariably regulated my conduct to you,—

*Hoc patrium est potius consuefacere filium,
Suâ sponte recte facere, quàm alieno metu.*

Believe that the only earthly object, which has now the power of interesting me, is your happiness. It is this which diverts my soul from the contemplation of that world which is to be her eternal abode. I would smooth your path to the great goal of human life. I would point out the means of happiness within your reach, and then

call on your reason to approve or not, accordingly as it shall agree or disagree with me.

I am not addressing a youth just starting into manhood, and I need not expatiate on the principle, "to be virtuous is to be happy." If there were any necessity of recalling this to your mind, the work of your education is indeed incomplete; I must have failed miserably in the end which I had always in view. Of late years, my son, you have been my friend, my *confidential* friend,—in many instances my adviser,—in distress, *always* my consoler, because I do not blush to avow, that you have a greater strength of mind, and elevation of thought, than I ever had the happiness to possess. In one word, you are a man and a Christian, and I desire, as such, to suggest to you

what happiness you may reasonably hope to attain.

The most important consideration towards the attainment of such an end, is *marriage*.

I believe, from your domestic inclinations,—from the strength and perhaps from the *infrequency* of your attachments,—from the natural sensibility and enthusiasm of your temperament,—that you are calculated to enjoy extreme felicity, or extreme misery in this state, accordingly as you shall select a partner whose disposition may respond to your own, or contrast with it.

Be careful then,—Oh, most careful. The cautious mariner, who, in the darkest night, continually sounds the ocean, fearing to be grounded in a shallow, or to be dashed against a hidden rock, should be your emblem.

On this point hangs your happiness, and so nicely is it poised, that the slightest touch—a breath—a sound—may depress—may destroy it.

In this age of refinement and luxury, *glitter* is too frequently substituted for the solid ore,—and so well does it deceive, that the closest inspection only can detect the cheat. Showy accomplishments occupy the place of solid information. Gaudiness of ornament is mistaken for beauty of structure. The ill-proportion of the column is carefully kept from observation by the laboured elegance of the frieze. The multitude admire,—the practised artist smiles and passes on. The mind bears the impress of the hand that formed it;—as is the instructor, so are the instructed. To the shameful laxity of morals that prevails in seminaries appropriated to

the education of our females, may be attributed most of the misery too frequently found in wedded life, and *all* the infamy that sometimes results from it. Whilst girls, scarcely past the years of childhood, are brought into the vortex of pleasure,—even of dissipation;—whilst they are led through the maze of festivities, and luxury;—whilst they are initiated in all the arts that attract the admiration, and ensure the attention of the crowd;—whilst their hearts are *lured* to throb at applauses bestowed by our sex;—whilst they are taught to abjure the blush of modesty, and to substitute for it the flush of vanity, to meet the ardent gaze of man;—he who appreciates happiness at its proper price, shudders at the prospect before him,—trembles as he sees the ruin that awaited himself,—perhaps

which he might have brought on one whom heaven intended to be virtuous, and whom education had prevented from obtaining happiness,—thanks God for his escape, and passes on unloving and unloved.

That the mind of women should be cultivated, even to its highest pitch of capacity, is essential to the happiness of that man who unites the scholar to the gentleman. Such a one, on engaging himself for life to a being in whom is vested so large a portion of man's felicity, seeks not a play-thing, not a source of amusement, but a rational companion, to whom he can communicate all his projects, all his sentiments, without fear of being misunderstood or derided. Her converse is to sooth him on escaping from the fatigues and the anxieties of public life; and he turns with delight

from the lofty altitude which he is obliged to assume in his intercourse with his fellows, to the period of relaxation and delight; when his mind, released from that extreme tension to which it had been excited, bends to the elegance, the softness, and the refined humility of her who is his solace—his hope—his dearer life.

All this, my son, your mother was to me. What I describe as *possible*, I have felt to be *real*. It is no unmanly tear that stains my paper, Albert;—I have lost her; we parted, “like two travellers;”—she has long reached the port to which all our projects, our cares, must ultimately bring us;—the Almighty witnesses for me, that I bowed in humble resignation to his will;—I have not repined;—but the time of my rejoicing

is at hand ;—for the wind that is to waft me to the sea of eternity, already breathes around me,—I *know*, that I am to meet her again.

From a plan of rational felicity, do not understand, that I, by any means, imagine, that the lighter accomplishments are to be excluded. When the mind is harassed by the cares of life, the substitution of elegance for utility is a grateful relief to it. She who delights in employing her talents for the amusement of her husband—who desires no louder praise than his smile—and who seeks no other reward than his approbation—has no ignoble mind, and is entitled to the highest respect. Mere *utility* supposes a coarseness, a *want of polish*, which our sex cannot easily forgive in the other. She who unites *le beau avec l'utile*, is the woman whom a man

of genius and of religion would call himself eminently happy to secure.

I am not going to select, from all those little peculiarities and gradations of mind which distinguish one female from another, that precise point which will be the most likely to confer happiness on you. The bent and the form of your own mind must determine for you. I might as well decide on the stature and the features of your future wife. I do not dictate,—I desire only to advise. Choose for yourself,—bearing in mind only, that on your decision depends your happiness.

I have before alluded to the infrequency of your attachments. At present, of the female part of creation you have seen very little. Engrossed by a fond father, and occupied by pursuits of the most absorbing and

extensive nature, you are, at eight-and-twenty, a novice in the sex.—I imagine that I, at this moment, receive from you a promise, not to engage yourself to any woman who may attract you, however lovely, however amiable she may appear, until you shall have been acquainted with her, *at least*, six months. During that time, see her in her family; for it is in a domestic circle that the character is to be developed. Study her minutely, and if it be possible to avoid it, do not let her suspect the interest you take in her. From that moment, you no longer see her as she is. She recollects all those graces and amiabilities which she has heard admired in others, and immediately she adopts them all. She appears always in a false semblance. She feels that you observe her, and she

holds up to you continually the fairest side of the portrait.

My friend Grafton——

It appeared, that the hand of death had arrested the writer;—the unfinished letter was discovered in his escritoire, nearly three months after his interment, by the son to whom it was addressed.

CHAPTER II.

“AND I am alone in the world!” said Albert Beverley to himself, as he stood at the window of the large oak-pannelled parlour, watching the last faint lines of the twilight. The wind murmured through the casement, and seemed to respond to his melancholy. “Yes, I am indeed alone,—with none to love, none by whom to be loved! There sate my father, there he watched the fading day, from whose glories he was so soon to be shut out for ever. It seems but as now, and he was *here*—elevating my hopes, advising, encouraging me. And that voice is still, and that countenance which always beamed on me with kindness

and affection, is cold and immutably fixed!—That hand which has so often been clasped in mine, that impressive action—I see it now—the finger extended—the arm leaning on the table—*dust, dust!*—Take, take away, Philip,—I cannot eat.”

The venerable domestic obeyed with a sigh. “The will of God must be done, sir,” said he, “my poor master thought so when my lady died.”

Albert passed his hand over his eyes,—“man is born to trouble;”—“and what am I, that I should dare to repine at being included in the common lot? the most illustrious, the most virtuous, the ornaments and the benefactors of mankind—all, all have their portion of suffering!” said he.

“And my master too, sir,” added

Philip,—“to lose my lady—so young, so beautiful,—and three blooming young gentlemen in one year,—it was not a little, sir, it was not a little.—But, God’s will be done! he made us, and he does with us as it pleases him.”

The servant quitted the apartment, and Albert paced across it with slow and melancholy steps.

His mind still dwelt on the parent he had lost. Gradually his memory recalled the precepts and the example that parent had given him. He asked himself, if the line of conduct he was pursuing, was such as would have obtained his father’s approbation. His conscience reproached him, that he had suffered his better faculties to slumber, whilst his mind had been enveloped in a mist of vain and sinful regret. The selfishness of his

grief, for the first time, distinctly struck him. He had spent that time in impious repinings against Providence, which ought to have been devoted to the benefit of mankind or to his own.

—“ Man, fool man ! here buries all his thoughts,
 “ Inters celestial hopes without one sigh.
 “ Pris’ner of earth, and pent beneath the moon,
 “ Here pinions all his wishes ; wing’d by heaven
 “ To fly at infinite, and reach it there,
 “ Where seraphs gather immortality,
 “ On Life’s fair tree, fast by the throne of God.
 “ What golden joys ambrosial clust’ring glow
 “ In his full beam, and ripen for the just,
 “ Where momentary ages are no more !
 “ Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death
 expire !
 “ And is it in the flight of threescore years
 “ To push eternity from human thought,
 “ And smother souls immortal in the dust ?
 “ A soul immortal, spending all her fires,
 “ Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,
 “ Thrown into tumult, raptured, or alarmed,

“ At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,
“ Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,
“ To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.”

The mind of Albert had been bowed by the pressure of affliction, so new and so poignant; but it had not been enervated or overwhelmed. His reason, once awakened, gradually regained its ascendancy. He accustomed himself to contemplate the future as a source from which happiness was to be derived. That strength of mind, and that calmness of appearance, which had been his distinguishing characteristics, again returned. He resumed his usual occupations,—his habits of study and of observation. To enlarge his views, and completely to shake off the melancholy that still clung to him, he visited the greater part of Europe. There he gathered a stock of obser-

ventions, which he considered as sources of future pleasure, of which nothing could deprive him. He revisited England, and that seat which was now his.

It was a spot highly favoured by nature, and improved by art. The prospects, from every aspect, were delightful and the embellishments were so exquisitely disposed, that the eye of taste discerned no defect. The house was spacious, and magnificent. It contained the best private library in the kingdom. A happy and flourishing tenantry blessed the bountiful hand that contributed so largely to their comforts. "And yet with all this, there wants something," thought Albert, and he read over the last letter of his father.

The abrupt conclusion embarrassed him. At what the allusion to Mr.

Grafton pointed, it was not in his power to conjecture. The extreme intimacy that had always existed between this gentleman and the Beverley family, had of late years been somewhat interrupted by Mr. Grafton's residence on the continent. He and Albert were personally strangers, but the character of each had been displayed to the other, as far as confidential correspondence can develope it. "I will visit him," thought Albert; "possibly he can supply this deficiency."

Albert felt that he had the power of acting on this resolution whenever he pleased, and he constantly postponed it. He became immersed in scientific speculations and discoveries;—a new world seemed to open around him, and he sought no society but that which he had always at

command—of philosophers and historians, who have enlightened mankind, and detailed the progress of knowledge. That polish of manner, which a residence on the continent had given to him, was rapidly resolving itself into the ease of conscious superiority. There was nothing in him that aimed at effect. A certain quietude that was visible in every action and in every motion, declared, at once, his elevation above the common mass of mankind, and his perfect indifference to opinion. There were few who durst aspire to his intimacy, because they felt that his peculiar habit of retiring into self, threw them at an invincible distance. His was one of those “master spirits” which require absolute dominion over others, without departing, in the slightest degree, from their usual track in order

to ascertain it. His inferiors venerated him;—the few who were his equals appreciated him;—he knew not a superior.

CHAPTER III.

TO SIR ALBERT BEVERLEY, BART.

IT is to you, my excellent old friend, that I turn in this last agonizing moment of life, and of distress, for assistance and for consolation.

When I left France I was immersed in speculations which completely absorbed me. I lost my usual habits; my mind became estranged from common objects; I forgot even my existence, and frequently neglected the means of supporting it. I no longer remembered "the charities of life;"—I inhabited the same house as my wife and my daughter, seldom seeing them, and conversing only in monosyllables. At length I was com-

pletely abstracted from ordinary occupations. I was no longer capable of understanding the sentiments of others. Medical assistance was deemed necessary. I confounded visions and realities ; I imagined that speculation was fact, and distinction identity ;—I mistook axioms for postulates, and acted on so absurd a theory. In short, I was a lunatic ; and though my madness was of a harmless species, medical attendance was absolutely requisite, and change of scene was ordered for me.

At this time we were at Venice, and we proceeded immediately to the republic of the Seven Islands. We returned again to Italy, and thence to Montpellier. My mind began to approach more nearly to a healthful tone, but my frame was gradually declining. I desired to re-

visit England;—I did so,—and found myself a beggar.

You knew my agent, and you warned me constantly against him. Still I was completely infatuated, and I considered your prepossessions against him, prejudice. My pursuits hourly demanded fresh supplies of money, and I entrusted to this man the negotiation of a mortgage on my estate in Shropshire. He himself became the mortgagee; loan after loan I obtained from him;—he foreclosed;—his brother was the purchaser.

My next step takes me to my grave, and I leave to my wife and my child—beggary.

Oh, Beverley, you know not, none but the sufferer can know, the agony, the deep, heart-breaking agony, of such a conviction. I have squandered

in useless speculations that which was not my own,—that which my child expected from me, clear and unincumbered as I received it from my father. And this child so young, — lovely, — and poor : — beauty, education, and poverty !—dreadful union !—

That dependence must be the lot of this daughter so dear, and yet despoiled by me of her inheritance, I am aware. But to you I look,—without any false delicacy (for surely this is not an hour for it), I call on you, Beverley, to be her guardian, to watch over her, to protect her from those tremendous dangers I fear for her, and to act by her, in every respect, as I would have done by your son, if it had been the pleasure of Heaven to reverse our situations. I consign her to you : both my trea-

tures, the mother and her child, have been taught to look on you as their sole friend on earth. Beverley, you will not refuse them your advice and your assistance,—I know you will not.

I have charged my wife to dispatch this letter to you immediately that I am consigned to my parent dust. If you cannot go to her, at least write,—and write kindly, my friend. Bereaved as they both are, they want soothing and consolation. I know I need not leave this charge with you. Pardon the anxiety of a mind, torn by the terrible conflict of repentance and anticipation of future evil to the dearest objects of affection. Our's has been no common friendship; it has been proved by a thousand circumstances. On your part one more trial is to be made:—Ah, Beverley!

I would have selected you from a thousand to meet such a trial.

You will find this sad legacy which I bequeath to you, at Warnesley Cottage, on the common that runs up to the mansion of my fathers. Oh, my friend, what a terrible fall has our house sustained!—and my own imprudence was the very source of it.

Farewell, Beverley!—Be to my child what we have been to one another.—The dying man confidently reposes his hope on you.

We shall meet again.—I BELIEVE, and I rely on the eternal promise of God.

Farewell!

EUSTACE GRAFTON.

“ And he is gone to whose friendship you so confidently trusted, poor

Grafton !" thought Albert, as he read the letter, evidently intended for his father—"Ye have indeed, met again, after a short separation !—And I will be a brother to thy wife, and a father to thy child. My house shall be their's—my fortune, their's.—Thou who art gone wouldst not have rendered them sincerer service than I will."

Albert, on that very day, set out for Warnesley Cottage. The journey was long, and he amused himself during its progress with reflections on the novel character which he was called on to sustain. He was about to introduce himself to two desolate beings as their voluntary and sole protector. He marked out various plans of conduct. He was to be the instructor of the child and the friend of the mother. In the former character, he

traced for himself a path, which he would inviolably pursue, and he promised to himself that no consideration should induce him to swerve from it.

He arrived. Mrs. Grafton received him with surprise. He related, as briefly as possible, the melancholy event which had placed him in the situation of his father. He offered, with earnestness and with sincerity, his friendship and his protection. Mrs. Grafton was grateful: all other resources were denied to her. Mr. Grafton had been dead more than two months when the letter was dispatched to sir Albert Beverley. It was not natural that her grief for the loss she had sustained, should be so great as it would have been, if alarming symptoms of that loss had not often appeared. During Mr. Grafton's melancholy estrangement, he

had been dead to his family, or in a state more afflicting than even death. The mind of his wife had been gradually bent to meet the blow, and its pressure consequently was not so violent.

“ I will be your friend—your brother, if you permit me, and the father of your child,” said Albert.

Mrs. Grafton looked at him for a moment, and slightly smiled.

It was not a smile of gratitude, but Albert received it as such.

CHAPTER IV.

BEVERLEY returned home to make preparations for his new inmates.

He was pleased with what he had seen of Mrs. Grafton. Her manners were polished, and her conversation sufficiently agreeable. Nevertheless, he was, on reflection, somewhat surprised that she had not shown him her child,—the child of his adoption.

Six weeks were yet to elapse ere they should arrive, and he returned to his former pursuits.

Sometimes, in the evening, he calculated with impatience on the time when female society would enliven the hour in which its influence is most

felt. He began to project improvements, which would require the inspection and the assistance of Mrs. Grafton. *His father's letter* was less frequently recurred to. Albert had listened to tales of *wooing* and of *winning*, and he desired ardently to escape from both. He liked the freedom with which he could roam from place to place; and he also liked the prospect of Mrs. Grafton's residence with him, because he should at once enjoy all the comforts of domestic life, with the power of changing the scene whenever inclination or caprice prompted.

She arrived.—He assisted her out of the carriage.

“ My daughter !—Sir Albert Beverley !”

Albert could not entirely repress a smile. In place of the blooming

little fairy, the docile pupil, the gay and sportive child he had pictured to himself, he saw a tall and not ungraceful figure, though deformed, in his opinion, by a certain reserved stateliness of air, which was perceptible in every motion. She accepted his assistance with a slight bow, and she did not speak more than monosyllables during the whole evening. Albert had not entirely shaken off a sense of disappointment occasioned by her appearance, which heightened the disagreeable impression he was conscious she had made on him. This feeling was unpleasant, because he knew that it affected his manner, and he ardently desired that his protégées should not feel the distance between the benefactor and the obliged. Mrs. Grafton was lively and agreeable : but Albert felt that this period on

which he had calculated so much, had not bestowed all the happiness he expected to derive from it.

The morning strengthened his prejudice, and instantaneously dispersed the sage resolutions he had made during the night. Miss Grafton's features were not bad, but there was a vacancy, a sullen reserve, which destroyed every character of beauty. Her complexion was pale olive, and she had no colour. It seemed as if her blood slept in her veins, and had imparted its drowsiness to her motions. There was no elasticity,—no animation,—scarcely life. The monotony of her voice destroyed any effect that might have been produced by its sweetness. When she spoke, all was common-place, and uninteresting. Albert soon grew tired of addressing her; he engaged Mrs. Grafton in a lively

discussion on the beauties of Mosaic pavement, and artificial grottos. Miss Grafton quietly kept her seat, without appearing in the least conscious that she was entirely excluded from conversation ; seldom, indeed, manifesting any attention to it.

As they gradually became domesticated at Beverley Hall, Albert hoped she might improve. He was disappointed. She was always inanimate, and appeared to have attained that enviable apathy, which is not affected either by misery or happiness. She was as far from exhibiting symptoms of disapprobation as of pleasure. Nothing excited emotion. The understanding of Mrs. Grafton was not above mediocrity, and our hero sighed, as he beheld all his plans of felicity so suddenly and so completely destroyed.

Sometimes they rode out on single horses. It was the only species of amusement, or occupation, or exercise, for which Miss Grafton had ever testified any preference. Albert was remarkably fond of it, and he accompanied her always on these excursions. All his endeavours failed to draw her into any thing like regular conversation. There was a cold and ungraceful politeness about her, which froze every feeling of kindness. Her riding was like every thing else that belonged to her, neither to be censured nor commended: she kept always that middle course between grandeur and littleness, which is as remote as possible from the line of genius or distinction.

Sir Albert had procured a harp and a piano for the use of *the Miss Grafton* he had pictured to himself. He en-

treated *the Miss Grafton he knew, to play*. She coldly declined it, on the plea of inability. He was scarcely disappointed; for he did not expect compliance.

Tired of his present course of life, and heartily desirous of returning to those pursuits from which he had been interrupted, he introduced his guests to the ladies of the neighbourhood as speedily as possible, and once more confined himself almost entirely to his library.

“*My father’s letter!*” he sometimes thought to himself:—“What would he think of the child of his friend?—How would he be surprised to find the comfort of my life destroyed by the perpetual presence of a being whom I value only on account of her misfortunes!—After all, is she unfortunate?—It depends on our own per-

ception of events, whether they are to be termed happy or otherwise. I believe that she is affected by nothing; her heart has been touched by a torpedo, and it cannot *feel*. She has neither *le beau* nor *l'utile*. As the child of my father's friend, my house and my fortune are at her service;—but I cannot afford to give her either my time or my conversation.”

Wearied by the monotony of his existence, Albert resolved to quit his house for some time. He looked through his port-folio, and found an invitation from a college intimate, Mr. Lockhart, which he determined to accept.—He deputed to Mrs. Grafton the presidency over his household during his absence, and left Beverley Hall with a sensation of recovered freedom, to which he had hitherto been a stranger.

CHAPTER V.

IT was strange that sir Albert Beverley left the mansion where he was supreme master, with the feeling of one just escaped from the yoke of tyranny.

The nearer he approached the seat of his friend Lockhart, the greater became his satisfaction. He went through the metropolis, and remained there a week, more delighted than usual with its variety, because it forcibly contrasted with the vapid uniformity from which he had fled.

He received from his friend Lockhart as warm a welcome as he had anticipated. He was exhilarated by it, and he more than ever rejoiced.

that he had left Beverley Hall to Miss Grafton.

Lady Mary Lockhart was a lively, fashionable woman, in the decline of life, if *such* a woman is ever past her meridian. Albert enjoyed her *agreeableness*, and if sometimes he detected the substitution of *show* for solidity, he recollected from what he had escaped, and forgave it.

“How do you like us?” said Lockhart to him about a fortnight after his arrival;—“how do you like us? I am anxious that you should think well of us. Have we tired you? To say truth, it is generally confoundedly dull, stopping at home with Lady Mary;—confess, have you not found it so?”

“I cannot for a moment associate the ideas of dulness and Lady Mary Lockhart. I never knew a more”—

Albert hesitated a moment for a word —“ a more *amusing* woman.”

“ Faith! I am right glad you find her so ; in very truth, one sometimes discovers that mothers are terribly *in-the-way* sort of beings.—Do not frown, and look like the college proctor ;—I know I am a sad dog ;—but you will forgive my *etourderies* when I bring you a classical excuse for them. You recollect how Themistocles defended his *égaremens* ;—“ the wildest colts,” said he, “ make the best horses when they come to be properly broken in and managed.”

“ But by this time, my dear Lockhart, you *ought* to be *broken in*. Five and twenty is no longer boyhood, and the *man*” —

“ *Should put away childish things*,” interrupted Lockhart, “ I believe you were going to say so, and I allow

that you have good authority. Indeed my mother, and my grandmother, and my uncles, and aunts, and cousins to the fifth generation, inclusive, inculcate daily precepts of sobriety and so forth, which pass my poor understanding. Nay, now you look as stern as Rhadamanthus ;—forgive me—I wonder at myself in daring thus to trifle with you. I ought to remember the distance between simple, mad-cap Harry Lockhart, who aspires to nothing higher than a quibble, or a pun, or a *bon-mot*, and the distinguished Albert Beverley, Fate committed a strange blunder when she threw us in the way of each other, and formed that intimacy between us, which reminds one always of the lion that took a fancy to the lamb,—I do not mean a fancy in the eating line, Beverley.”

The good-humour and apparent want of vanity of Lockhart were invincible. Albert was subdued by it.

“ Yes, you look like my friend again now ; and I dare ask you what I have wanted to do ever since you have been with us : are you—do not *despise* me for my audacity,—you cannot *wonder* at me, more than I wonder at myself,—are you enraptured with your ward ?”

“ Which of my wards,—the mother or the daughter, do you mean ?” asked Albert ; for it seemed to him that the power of captivating belonged rather to the former.

“ Ye gods, what a question !—This must be—I dare scarcely even imagine it in you,—but this *must* be affectation. For that you can have been so completely blind to the matchless witcheries of Ella Grafton

as that question seems to imply, passes belief."

"Pardon me,—it is really true," said Albert coldly.

"Then what *do* you think of her?" demanded Lockhart anxiously.

Beverley was not in the habit of opening his heart to every man who would be glad to pry into it, and he chose not to depreciate a person whom he had obliged. "I have scarcely thought of her," said he.

"Do you mean to say, then, that you have actually lived in the same house with Ella Grafton, without *thinking* of her?" demanded Lockhart.

"Not exactly without thinking of her, but certainly without being so powerfully impressed by her, as you seem to expect."

"Upon my soul, Beverley, you become more incomprehensible daily.

I ever knew you a man of solitary habits, much given to serious pursuits, a contemner of folly, and above being affected by the common accidents that derange the system of lesser planets,—myself, *par exemple*. I know you would rather have watched the transit of Venus over the Sun's disk with Solander, than have been her partner in Olympic revels, even if the Muses had been *fiddlers*, and Mercury master of the ceremonies. You prefer a telescope to an opera glass ; and a stroll through Keswick vale, to a walk in Bond-street, towards the latter end of May. You prefer Shakespeare to Kotzebue, Lord Byron to any classic poet from Virgil downwards, and the *chef-d'œuvres* of Canova to the sublime mutilations of the Elgin marbles. You prefer a rational and distinguished man to a

beautiful and exquisitely silly woman. You prefer looking on to dancing at any time. In short, you are made up of eccentricities, but *this* passes all. Ella Grafton, who was admired for her grace in France, her fascination and musical talents in Italy, and for her animated beauty in Greece, has actually produced no impression on you. It is most monstrous and inconceivable. Tell me candidly, did you ever look at her?"

"Frequently."

"*Sacré!*—has she not the most enchanting mobility of countenance that ever captivated an adorer of variety?"

"Certainly not; on the contrary, she has the most rigid flexibility of muscle, I remember to have seen in any person."

"It is not the same, it is not the same, it *cannot* be the same!" ex-

claimed Lockhart, joyfully, “ you do not know *my* Ella Grafton ; it is her stupid, silent, pale, uninteresting, inflexible kinswoman to whom you have the honour of being guardian. *Entre-nous*, I am highly delighted that it has happened so, for I should have been confoundedly sorry to have had a rival like you, for with *such* a woman I could have stood no chance. Now, for I love to talk of her, let me tell you what my Ella is : her expression, aye, I begin with that ; it varies continually, and every change is equally irresistible. I have seen her weep,—that still, that silent tear, that speaks the holy rapture which none but genius ever feels, which none but genius can pourtray, and which, therefore, I leave to your imagination. You know, however the influence a woman’s tears *always* have

over me :—think then, how I am affected by them, when they soften the brilliancy of the brightest eyes, in nature, and gem the finest dark, silken fringe imagination can portray. She sighs !”

“ Very ambrosial, I dare say,” interrupted Beverley, “ I give your imagination all due credit ; but, I would not draw on it more largely.”

“ Infidel ! I am inspired ! I am on the tripod ! I feel the influence of the deity !—Interrupt me not, but recognize the reality of the portrait by the minuteness of the touches.—Her *sigh*,—yes, her *sigh* has over me all the influence of enchantment,—of intoxication ;—I forget myself,—the world,—everything but Ella, and the grace of her pensiveness.—She smiles ! Oh, Jupiter ! her smile is like the morning beam to the wretch who has spent

years in a long dreary night of captivity and darkness ;—all sensation, all emotion vanishes before it, except that which itself inspires ;—it seems to me, that there can be nothing more delightful on earth, until—she speaks ! Oh, Beverley, the magic of her voice !—soft, full, and delicious, it is attuned to heaven's own harmony ; on every subject it preserves its own delightful cadence, contrasting continually its modulations. She has charms which penetrate every heart ;—touching even in her brilliancy,—soft in her dignity ;—and Beverley, Beverley, this woman is to be mine !”

“ You are a very happy man. If it is not a fancy-portrait, I envy you.”

“ And then her manner,”—continued Lockhart ;—“ it is so peculiar,—so different from any thing one

sees in others. That which common minds consider affectation and the result of study, is, in fact, nature. I can compare it to nothing but a piece of Florentine marble; the veins of which are formed into landscapes so regular, that they appear the production of the most exquisite art. Then there is something so classic about her,—a genius, that seems palpable in every attitude,—in every motion. Above all, I admire her for her extraordinary *openness*,—her transparency of mind. There is no vanity in her composition. There are no littlenesses to be detected,—no foibles to be dreaded. She shows herself as she really is;—she has neither the vanity of affecting to know less than she really *does* know, nor that of assuming talents which she does not possess. She is too proud for exhi-

bition, and, like the convolvulus, the sun must always shine on her, before she can be known. She has *pride*;—sometimes I have seen her walk, as “if she would veil earth with her haughty shadow.” Her polished courtsey throws one at a greater distance, than the most repulsive hauteur. When she addresses people in general, there is a certain air of grandeur and conscious superiority about her,—a peculiar inflection of voice,—which seems to express a desire of bending to the inferiority of the persons addressed, and yet of raising them above their usual level. When she is animated, her graceful action is irresistible.—And *this* is the woman, whom I supposed you had been senseless enough not to admire!”

“ I never yet had the honour of

seeing such an one," replied Beverley.
" I can only assure you, that if you had intended to describe the diametrical opposite of *my* Miss Grafton, you could not have succeeded better."

" Your Miss Grafton, indeed!—one of those insignificant beings whom one sees to-day and forgets to-morrow, I suppose."

" Not quite. In truth, since I have known her, I have thought of her continually."

" Solve this enigma, for I cannot comprehend it. How is it possible to think of a woman whom one neither admires nor loves?"

" Without disputing on the *possibility*, I can only affirm the actual existence of such an event. Having once seen Miss Grafton, there is an uncomfortable feeling connected with her idea, which clings to one, and

which it is impossible entirely to lose. I believe the eye would select her in the midst of a crowd. Not because she is beautiful, or graceful, or animated, but because there is a something—an undefinable, inexpressible *je ne sais quoi*—which no other has, and which, though anything rather than attractive, preserves her from insignificance, and me from forgetting her.”

“ Did you ever happen, by any chance, to see my sister, Kate ? ”

“ Never, ”

“ You never did ?—Well, I tell you she is worth all the rest of us.—If you were to see no other curiosity than her, the trouble of your journey from Beverley-Hall would be well repaid.—I am glad she was out of the way when you arrived, because I would have all your gratifications in an

ascending scale ; and like a dainty child, I reserved the *bonne bouche* until last. I will give you no clue to understand Kate ;—develope her mind if you think it worth the trouble, and understand her if you can.”

Beverley had frequently thought of *his father's letter* whilst Lockhart was speaking. The portrait Lockhart had sketched of Miss Grafton, combined qualities of whose existence Albert had only dreamt or speculated on. There was something so alluring to the imagination,—so captivating,—so irresistible, in the picture ; it was so distinct from what one sees or expects. Beverley sat in profound reverie, nearly an hour, when he retired to his apartment. He recollected all that Lockhart had said, and he desired to compel his imagination to embody a form that should possess

all these graces. In vain :—he saw nothing but *the Miss Grafton he knew* ; she clung to his thoughts, and pursued him in his dreams. It was seldom that he entirely forgot her, and some recurrence to beauty or agreeableness perpetually dispersed that forgetfulness, and presented her to his recollection in all the coldness, the vapidness, the reserve, and the mediocrity, of which he had left her in possession at Beverley-Hall.

“ *My father’s letter !* ” thought he ;—“ neither his definition of *le beau* nor of *l’utile* would describe the eccentric Miss Grafton of Lockhart’s acquaintance, nor the still more eccentric Miss Grafton of mine !—And what is Kate Lockhart ? ”

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT Catherine Lockhart was, Beverley had soon the means of attempting to discover.

On his first introduction to her, he was powerfully struck with the extreme contrast between her and Miss Grafton. There was life and motion, even to restlessness, in every feature, in every limb. It was impossible that the mind could seize any particular expression of her countenance, for it changed continually. There was a certain *fancifulness* in her *manière d'être*, which perpetually attracted attention, and frequently admiration. Albert was interested by her, because the difficulty of dis-

covering the spring from which her actions flowed excited his curiosity;—and besides, she possessed the universally acknowledged means of inspiring *interest*,—extreme beauty.

She had a cultivated taste, and gradually she became intimate with Albert Beverley. Whilst there was a frankness, even to freedom, in her general manner, it was impossible not to perceive that there lurked behind, a feeling of conscious superiority that derided the beings to whom she condescended to speak on terms of equality. Sometimes this feeling was more visible than at others, and the uncertainty of her manner gave her the appearance of caprice, of which the world complained, whilst it still remained the sport of it. Albert detected the real position of her mind;—he saw, that its apparent

levity, was the result of a haughty and careless superiority, which was sometimes even openly avowed. Her animation and the bursts of genius which, at intervals, flashed from her, were the more conspicuous and dazzling from their extreme variety and uncertainty. Often when it seemed that her whole soul was displayed to the view of others, a shade came across it, which declared, at once, she had been acting a part, and amusing herself with having so well deceived spectators.

The anniversary of Lockhart's birthday was celebrated as usual by a splendid gala. It was impossible not to be struck by the gloom of Miss Lockhart's appearance, which contrasted so forcibly with the gaiety of every one around her. Towards the evening, however, it gradually

dispersed ; and a more than ordinary brilliancy played over her, as, leaning on the arm of Beverley, she entered the saloons where the guests were already assembled.

Sometimes Albert admired her genius, and, at others, he recoiled from her eccentricity. The union of these qualities in her character resembled two powerful chemical substances of opposite quality, which being mingled, produce one neutralized mass. In proportion as the first attracted, the other repelled him. It was, as if she directed her shafts at him, whilst she herself presented the shield, that defended him from their attacks.

She courteously noticed the guests in general, without distinguishing any individual. She had been in the

midst of them rather more than half an hour, when the door opened, and Mr. and Mrs. St. Clair were announced.

Albert perceived the almost convulsive shudder that shook the hand which reposed on his arm. He looked in her face;—she still retained her colour, but her lips were blanched. For the first time, Albert detected that her unusual bloom this evening was artificial.

“You are ill,” said he;—“had not you better retire?”

The sudden crimson that flushed her neck and temples, marked the effect this question produced. “I thank you,” she said, in a voice less clear than usual, but quite as forcible, and with a degree of haughtiness that had never before been directed against

him;—"I am quite well; and consequently it would be ridiculous to withdraw."

At this moment, Mr. and Mrs. St. Clair approached her. The suppression of some painful feeling was sufficiently obvious, in the slight contraction of Miss Lockhart's brows. She seemed to recover herself with a powerful effort;—and Beverley's heart glowed within him, as he witnessed the sudden elevation of her form, and the air of grandeur and of even regal dignity, that diffused itself all over her, as she paid and received their compliments.

There was a peculiarity in the manner of each of the trio, that attracted the closer attention of Beverley. When Miss Lockhart named him, Mr. St. Clair fixed on

him a look of the minutest scrutiny; a supercilious smile curled the lip of his wife;—and Catherine's countenance expressed a bitterness of derision which she essayed not to control. Towards St. Clair himself, her manner was friendly, but towards his wife, it displayed an invincible politeness, that denoted extreme and unconquerable contempt.

Miss Lockhart was called on to begin the dance. Albert led her to the set. The peculiar indolence of her manner, denoted the constraint she endured in partaking of this amusement. But she had scarcely passed half down, when the very spirit of vivacity seemed to inspire her. The grace and the agility of her motion appeared almost aerial. Albert remarked the change, and he

observed, at the same moment, that Mrs. St. Clair was amongst the spectators.

They finished, and he led her to a seat.

The elasticity of her mind appeared completely exhausted by her exertions. She was profoundly silent, and a sigh, amounting almost to a convulsion, once or twice agitated her.

Albert was astonished, but he did not suffer that astonishment to appear. He began to suspect, that this being—so lovely,—so young,—so talented,—so endowed,—was oppressed by suffering of no common nature. Such a suspicion could not but increase interest, and inspire curiosity.

Lockhart approached them, and threw himself into a seat by the side of his sister.

“The St. Clair this evening,” said he, “is quite *endimanchée*, as the French call it. Rouge and pearl-powder are very attractive, are they not? She resembles that pupil of Apelles, who, not being able to make his Helen beautiful, determined, at least, to make her fine. Her affectation is about as good a substitute for grace, elegance, and vivacity, as Henry the Eighth’s deceptions artillery at Boulogne was for real cannon. To-night she appears inclined to sport an air of infinite ease and non-chalance, forgetting, at the same time, that it is as dangerous for her to throw aside her inflexibility, as it is for the tortoise to thrust its head out of its shell. How gay she is! her spangles are actually forming a wake after her.”

“She is like the bolides in Cumana,

that are so bright and fiery, and that leave after them luminous traces and their phosphorescence," said Miss Lockhart, suddenly excited to a pitch of extreme vivacity.

"Who is Mrs. St. Clair?" demanded Albert.

"*Nobody*," replied Lockhart, who was accustomed to describe all the non-descript animals that are generally classed under the denomination of men and women, by that name: "or, at least, she would be *nobody*, were she not the wife of St. Clair."

"And who is he?" asked Albert.

"One," replied Lockart,

"Whose life was gentle, and the elements

"So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up,

"And say to all the world, *This was a man!*"

"Such was St. Clair! he is strangely altered *now*,—a thousand curses on

that woman who has so changed him !”

At this moment Mrs. St. Clair approached, and wished to know if Miss Lockhart chose to waltz.

Catherine refused, with a look expressive at once of surprise, indignation, and contempt ; Mrs. St. Clair walked away.

“ That woman seems to dare you to the contest !” said Lockhart, after a silence of some minutes. He walked with his sister and Albert to the circle that had formed round Mrs. St. Clair, and an officer with whom she had just begun to waltz.

Joined to unusual height, Mrs. St. Clair’s form had a muscular breadth and squareness that destroyed all appearance of contour. At five and thirty, firmness of sinews had displaced the pliant grace of youth. Tall,

stiff, and unbending ; a neck miserably deficient in that exquisite *tour-nure*, on which the grace of a figure principally depends ; the total immobility of expression ; the ineloquently white complexion ; the light thin head of hair, its deficiency more perceptible from the French costume which it caricatured,—were decided imperfections thrown into the most glaring light.

“ A woman with luxuriant dark hair, and full, bright, dark eyes, may be a beauty as long as she lives, if she has only variety of expression. But those light, lamentably *spare* locks, look dreadfully *passé*,” said Lockhart. “ You *should* waltz, Kate ; this is an actual throwing of the gauntlet on the part of Mrs. St. Clair.”

“ I dare not,” said Catherine, shak-

ing her head with an air of profound humility and hopelessness; — “ *antistat mihi millibus trecentis : parva sum ; nulla sum ; altum nec spiro, nec spero.* Besides,” — continued she, assuming an air and gesture perfectly theatrical,

“ I am not fit for courts, —————

“ ————— I cannot cast

“ Unholy glances from a side-long eye,

“ Or give my untouched body to the wreath

“ Of mazy dances, where all decency

“ Is lost in Pleasure’s ’wildered labyrinth.” —

“ Always the same !” said a voice behind them ; it was Mr. St. Clair’s.

Lockhart went away instantly, and St. Clair occupied his place by the side of Catherine.

“ I have been looking round these apartments,” said he ; “ I detect every where marks of *you* ; their magnificence, their exquisite taste, the classic

air that pervades them, all breathe of *you*. This, and the assemblage of wit, learning, virtue, and wisdom, dispersed throughout, remind one of Athens in its glory,—of Athens, when it was distinguished by the appellation of “*the Residence of the Gods!*”

“You flatter,” said Catherine, with an air of affected indifference, “these compliments only serve to remind one of deficiencies.”

“How changed, and yet the same!” said St. Clair, in a suppressed voice.

“Do you remember,” said Catherine, with an air of abstraction, “do you remember that remarkable sentence, in Bossuet’s funeral oration on the Prince de Condé?—‘Ces colonnes, qui semblent porter jusqu’au ciel le magnifique temoignage de notre néant.’”

Albert observed them attentively; their eyes met; perhaps never glance

expressed so much. There was a tear in St. Clair's, but the dark hazel of Catherine's became for an instant glazed.

In a few moments she recovered herself, and went on, still with an air of abstraction. "How comes it, that the young are frequently more impressed with images of gloom than the old? Do you remember what Cramer says, speaking of the divine Klopstock's early melancholy, and his gaiety at a more advanced period of life?—'I could wish to know,' he writes, 'from what cause it arises, that in many persons who are remarkable for sensibility, and strong powers of imagination, precisely that period of life when the body is in its greatest vigour, and the animal spirits are the most lively; when the prospect of all the delights of honour and friendship is most fair and blooming,

and when the termination of these enjoyments appears at the greatest distance ; that period is, however, frequently the time of melancholy reflections, of familiarity with the grave, and habitual contemplation of death ? Perhaps it is, that they anticipate greater misfortune than others, and consider death as the means of escape from them. Such a contemplation certainly divests it of its terrors. Happy they who die in youth, inexperienced in the fallaciousness of hope, unwounded by the disappointments of sensibility, not blasted by the sudden gale of adversity, not seared by the corroding hand of care.”

“ Catherine, Catherine, you torture me beyond endurance,” whispered St. Clair ; “ spare me, for the love of God. Do you think that *I am upon a bed of roses?*”

Albert observed the whisper, but he could not hear it. He saw the silent anguish that appeared in the countenances of both. He perceived the pressure which St. Clair gave the hand of Catherine, as he gently removed it from his arm, and rushed from the apartment. He watched the bursting tear in her eye, and the convulsive heaving of her form. He witnessed that writhing of the lip, that silent and inscrutable agony, which is felt by none but the impassioned and the enthusiastic. He heard her laboured breathings, each breath amounting almost to a sigh; he heard—he pitied—he was almost indignant that any other than himself had the power of exciting such emotion; he envied him; and yet he wished to believe, that this was the interest of friendship *only*.

CHAPTER VII.

AFTER this evening, Albert observed Miss Lockhart more closely than ever.

If it were possible to avoid the St. Clairs without appearing evidently desirous of it, she always did so. Although her countenance did not change when their name was mentioned, it was obvious that it excited an unusual feeling, and that considerable effort alone enabled her to repress the appearance of it. She read a great deal, and contrived never to be unoccupied. Her conversations with Beverley were extremely unreserved. She appeared to delight in speaking

with him on subjects, not generally in the range of female research. But she carefully restrained every symptom of unhappiness; she never alluded to it. She spoke frequently of the great benefits she enjoyed above others, and she was especially fond of conversing on religious topics.

Beverley's affection for her increased hourly, and the more he indulged in her society, the more necessary it became to him. Sometimes he forgot the existence of the St. Clairs, and at others a thousand doubts tormented him, which he desired to dissipate by seeking her confidence. As frequently he was prevented by the recollection of the pain the mention of them always caused her. He felt that he deserved her, but he felt also, that whilst her manner preserved this quiet friendliness

and confidence towards him, he had little chance of success.

Sometimes he was resolved to try the effect of absence, and as often he was prevented from the execution of that design by the fascination of her manner, and the captivating genius that pervaded her conversation.

The acknowledged talents of Miss Lockhart attracted to their house men of the greatest eminence in the literary world. With most of them Beverley was already acquainted, and he was pleased with their general society. Many foreigners visited there, and the variety of manner naturally induced by this mixture of nations, gratified the observer of human nature.

In proportion as the superiority of Catherine became more evident, the passion of Beverley for her increased ;

and as her mental sufferings became more visible, his suspicions of St. Clair returned with redoubled violence.

“I do not wonder,” said he to Lockhart, one day, “I do not wonder at the general disgust the waltz inspires in England; I am only astonished that there are individuals to be found who tolerate it, either by endurance or practice.”

“Aye, this is very well in you, Beverley, but it would not do at all in *me*, you know,” said Lockhart; “I cannot pretend to set up for a reformer of manners, or a censor of them. Now the waltz seems to me a very delightful, graceful, enchanting, intoxicating sort of affair, in which I am always glad to join with a young and pretty woman.”

“*Your* Miss Grafton waltzes, perhaps?”

“ Who ? — Ella ? — Faith, no ! — no one would think of asking her, in the first place ; and if they did, she *would* not, I am convinced.”

“ She wants, then, a principal charm in your estimation ? ”

“ Oh no, — not at all ; — on the contrary, that sort of thing would not suit Ella Grafton. But, to say truth, there is, on recollection, something *high and mighty* about her, which I should be quite as glad that my wife should want. It would throw me rather too much into shade, I fancy.”

“ You intend then to break off your engagement with her ? ”

“ Engagement ! — what engagement ? ”

“ I recollect your calling on me for congratulation, that such a woman *was to be your's*.”

“ Oh, aye, true, — but that was

only *conditionally*, that I could persuade her, and that I should continue in the same mind. Consider, it is a long time since I saw her; I have been in the sphere of a hundred girls since, who, if they have not her talents, suit me the better on that account. No, I assure you, I do not think of Ella Grafton now, more than of my own sister."

Beverley sighed, and he recurred to *waltzing*.

"If you had ever seen it in Germany you would not endure it in England," said he. "Mrs. St. Clair's exhibition was a vile caricature of it."

"Mrs. St. Clair is a vile caricature of every thing that is graceful and fashionable," returned Lockhart; "she is a stupid, ugly, heartless, insipid woman."

"Her husband appears a gentle-

manly, dignified character, and it is difficult to conceive why he chose a partner so opposite to himself."

"Aye, but know you not, Beverley, 'there are more things in heaven than are dreamt of in our philosophy?'—'Thereby hangs a tale,' of which, however, I speak not."

"There are few men who would choose to see their wives waltz, I think," said Beverley.

"The St. Clair might waltz to the devil, and he would not say her *no*, I believe. These things are 'marvellous strange,' are they not?—Perhaps, St. Clair thinks women thrive well on contradiction, and therefore tries the effect of an opposite mode of conduct."

"Is Mrs. St. Clair happy with him?"

"No; she never can be: it is im-

possible. She knows that he understands her thoroughly; and she knows, consequently, that notwithstanding the politeness, the attention, and the courtesy which he always observes to her, he cannot but despise her.

“Lockhart,” said Albert, after a pause,—“my very agreeable visit to your house must terminate to-morrow.”

“Nay!—how?” demanded Lockhart, with an air of extreme surprise, and evident vexation.

“You know,” said Beverley, smiling, “that having once resolved, I am *unpersuadable*;—to-morrow I bid you adieu.”

Lockhart’s embarrassment was obvious. Beverley observed it, without being able to penetrate the cause. He felt that there was danger in remaining so near Catherine,—he feared

the mystery that hung over her,—
and he desired to try if absence would
weaken the impression she certainly
had made on him.

CHAPTER VIII.

TO MISS GRAFTON.

I KNOW not, my dear Ella, how to reply to your question.—I scarcely can decide whether the present quietude of my mind, be resignation or despair,—whether I am more tranquil, or only more careless of the worst that can befall me.—Has not *this worst* already happened?—Can I suffer more?—No, Ella, no; it is but a perpetual recurrence of the same tortures;—all that *can* be felt, I have already endured.

What increase of pain do I not owe to a heated imagination, a sensibility wrought to the most exquisite

pitch, and a substitution of feeling for reason! What is genius to the possessor but an additional source of misery, if unhappiness should be his lot?—It but increases his perception of misery. The mind acquires, from the indulgence of this pernicious sensibility, the same delicacy as the body of that luxurious Sybarite, who was inconvenienced by the folding of a rose-leaf upon his couch. Man requires a perpetual increase of mental strength; those pursuits that enervate his reason, and heighten his imagination, are fatally dangerous to him.

And yet it is to this genius, and to this heightened imagination that I owe the only satisfaction I am capable of enjoying. I feel, that fame, notwithstanding the adverse circumstances that may tarnish its lustre, is

an abundant reward for the pains that have procured it. The applause that attends the exertion of man's nobler faculties, is sufficient recompense for them. Such has ever been the opinion of philosophers. Hence, when Lycurgus, the orator, had delivered Xenocrates from the tax-gatherers who were carrying him to prison, and afterwards prosecuted them for their insolence, the philosopher said to the children of his protector and avenger, "I have made a noble return to your father for the service he did me; for all the world praise him for it."

"It is in pursuit more than in attainment, that our pleasure now consists," says Blair. I seek no good on earth, because I know that there is none within my grasp. My sum of happiness has been blotted out

from the book of time. We are amused with running after phantoms, only whilst we believe them to be tangible substances; when we discover how impalpable, how illusory they are, we turn from them with disgust. All my hope of happiness rests beyond the grave. To that goal I am journeying with impatience. All my actions tend to that one centre of hope. I amuse myself with the most exhilarating speculations on eternity. I believe that I shall rise again in this very body, however purified and embellished; that I shall recognize him whom I have so fondly and so fatally loved here. We know not—mortals cannot imagine—the sentiments by which *spirits* are affected. We have not the power of comprehending how they can communicate with each other, deprived of those organs by which we possess

that power. Consequently on their affections we can only speculate by what we at present feel. And I with the Meta of the divine Klopstock, “ feel that a brother whom I have so “ long known, with whom I have “ been so long united, I should love “ differently from all the inhabitants “ of heaven. With *tenderness* I should “ love him.”—Yes, I shall in *eternity* love unrestrained him whom it is a crime to love *now*.

It is a delightful idea, that the present state of man is but the first of a series of approaches towards that Being who is the standard of perfection and happiness.—It is a felicity to believe that I shall be associated with *him*, whose soul even here has always blended with mine ; in every progressive state I thank God continually, that I have lived in the same age with him,—that I have known

him. For a short space, Ella, I believed that I had nothing to be grateful for. Impious that I was! what a source of enjoyment is that capacity which it has pleased the Omnipotent to bestow on me!

I picture him to myself in various stages of future existence, always in the form that has been so dear to me here. It seems no irrational imagination. Whatever is a substance must always continue a substance. The chemist, in his experiments, gives to one body a variety of shapes, and, at length, by his skill restores it to its original form. Man, when dissolved in dust, is still a substance;—if his ashes be dispersed through the universe, there is still substance, and the idea of self-subsistence. It is easy, therefore, to imagine, that we may rise again even in the forms

we have worn on earth. Omnipotence can effect whatever involves not a contradiction ;—and to restore what is still substance, to a different *combination* or *mode* of the same substance, is a consistent power, and dependent only on the will of the Almighty operator.

“ But not till Time has calmed the ruffled breast,
“ Are these fond dreams of happiness confest.
“ Not till the rushing winds forget to rave,
“ Is heaven’s sweet smile reflected on the wave.”

I am calm, then,—I am resigned. Sometimes, it is true, I cannot entirely prevent criminal regret. I indulge in vain desires. I would fondly recall the past, and mould the future to my wishes. When I see him,—ah, Ella ! this is surely a trial !—it tortures—it agonizes me.—And yet my pride,—my invincible pride,—makes me dare it continually, and I smile and look

as indifferent as the wretched triflers around me, whilst my heart is writhing,—is bursting, under the pressure! —You cannot conceive the despotic government, the unceasing vigilance, I am obliged to maintain over myself,—the hours of reflection it costs me to regain that calmness of which these scarcely-endurable trials deprive me! But I will not shrink now,—I will endure it to the end!

Would that that end were nearer! —Would that I could feel the approach of that mighty and irresistible monarch to whose dominion I would so gladly bow!—But God's will be done!—to his decrees I submit!

I have talked to you a long time of myself, Ella; grief makes me an egotist. You will forgive it.

Sir Albert Beverley left us this morning. I regret his departure.

There are few characters that have interested me more. Amongst his other extraordinary qualities, he has that decided attribute of a strong mind, which Antipater remarked of Aristotle, that "of persuading people to whatever he pleases." He may be described in the words of M. Barthelemi, applied to Pisistratus, "*Jamais homme ne réunit plus des qualités pour captiver les esprits. Une naissance illustre, des richesses considérables, une valeur brillante et souvent éprouvée, une figure imposante, une éloquence persuasive, à la quelle le son de sa voix prêtoit des nouveaux charmes ; un esprit enriché des agrémens que la nature donne, et des connoissances que procure l'étude.*" In his conversation with the female sex, there is that gallantry of heart, which one finds chiefly among the

southern nations of Europe, and the very perfection of its tenderness in France. The peculiar tone of his mind resembles the auriferous pyrites, varied with alternate streaks of bright and opaque, yet its prevailing appearance sombre; or fire-marble, the luminous and splendid veins of which are scattered, and perceptible only in certain lights. His brilliancy appears like native gold in a quartz rock, perceptible only at very remote intervals. The woman who once saw the grandeur, the magnificence of his countenance, the fire of his eye, and the splendid intelligence that beams in it, would worship it with devotion as fond as that of the Romans towards the eagle that glittered in the front of their legions, and she would deem it scarcely less impious to abandon it in the hour of danger. To adopt the

idea of a modern celebrated poet, in speaking of a contemporary one, "his beauty is like that of an alabaster vase, which requires to be lighted up before its perfection becomes visible."

In short, it is only a heart so withered and so desolate as mine, that could resist him.

You forbade me to speak to him of you, and I have obeyed. What actuates your conduct, at present, I am, I confess, at a loss to discover. You are completely impenetrable. Whatever end you desire to attain, I can only wish you success: I am sure that it is honourable.

The chevalier Balermo has returned to Italy, and has made some important discovery concerning the pyramids at Djiza, more particularly that of Cheops. He is now on his way to England,—to us, in short,—and comes

enriched with intaglios of the hieroglyphics in the temple of Apollinopolis Magna, besides cork models of that of Hermopolis, and the Cryptæ. His society will surely tempt you to travel to us. I shall summon you immediately on his arrival.

Do not think of your ancient torment, Lockhart. Other cares completely engross him.

Farewell, my dear Ella. Commend me to your mother.

CATHERINE LOCKHART.

CHAPTER IX.

SIR Albert Beverley arrived at *home*.

This was a name which had formerly imparted to him the same cheering sensations which the idea of it generally brings to the soul of the traveller. But now it appeared cold and comfortless. There was none to welcome him,—no heart that throbbed impatiently to greet him,—no steps that flew to meet his approach. It was late in autumn, and the falling leaves,—the gradual embrowning of the trees,—the chill of the air,—were felt keenly by him. It seemed as if a friend had died with the summer. In short, he felt that he was receding every step from Catherine Lockhart.

He received the cold greeting of the inanimate Miss Grafton with additional disgust. He looked at her now with a feeling little short of aversion. He saw her quietude, and he thought of the animation of Catherine;—he heard her commonplace remarks, and he remembered the genius and the novelty that had sparkled in Catherine's;—he felt her coldness, and he remembered Catherine's enthusiasm;—he saw the frigidity of her countenance, and he remembered the incessant variety of Catherine's.

With these recollections, there came also one that pressed on him more heavily than all,—the mystery that hung over Miss Lockhart.

That he loved, he could not deny;—and that his love was hopeless, he avowed to himself.

He resumed his former occupations, but they had lost the power of interesting him. He could no longer absorb himself in theories and speculations, when the contemplation of realities would intrude on him. He could not form plans for the benefit of others, whilst his decision fluctuated on the means of happiness to himself.

Mrs. Grafton exerted all her talents to dissipate the lassitude that visibly hung over him. He received the attempt with gratitude, and was sometimes amused, for a short time, at the liveliness of her remarks, and the worldly knowledge she possessed. Besides her having resided for many years on the continent gave her the power of recalling some agreeable recollections to the mind of Beverley.

But her vivacity never amused

him for a long period, it was so different from the grace of Catherine's. What, abstractedly considered, appeared entertaining, became insipid when compared with that from which he had formerly received so much pleasure. It was from memory, that he derived the greatest felicity, and even this was mixed with a proportionate degree of pain.

Indisposition also contributed to overwhelm him with *ennui*. He was obliged to confine himself entirely to the house. Mrs. Grafton was sensible of the charms of what is generally called good neighbourhood, and she frequently enjoyed them. During these absences, Sir Albert was left always to the mercy of Miss Grafton.

In their first *tête-à-tête*, he had recourse to a book. Miss Grafton immediately availed herself of the

privilege of imitating him. A violent head-ache presently obliged him to lay it aside. She closed her's instantly.

“ Do not let my presence interrupt you,” said Sir Albert, faintly smiling.

“ It does not,” she replied coldly.

“ Pardon me; you were reading whilst I read, and it is an extremely improbable co-incidence, that our respective subjects should have ceased to interest us precisely at the same moment.”

“ One must sometimes sacrifice to politeness.”

“ Is there an absolute necessity?”

“ I do not know; I am not a philosopher. I have been told that it is proper sometimes to sacrifice our own inclinations to the comfort of others.”

“ But do you really suppose, my dear Miss Grafton, that I have more comfort in seeing you devoured by *ennui*, than in knowing that you are interested by being occupied ?”

“ I never considered the question. It is sufficient for me, that I perform what is required of me. If the means do not attain the end I desired, that is nothing to me. I thought they were right, and to me they became so.”

“ But if it is proved to you that they are wrong, you surely do not believe that it is right to persist in them.”

“ Perhaps you deceive yourself in imagining, that you would rather I continued reading, or it may be only an effort of politeness on your part to say that you preferred it. I am not a sophist or a logician. There is a

certain line of right marked out for me, and I do not choose to swerve from it."

"But if it be proved to you that your line is drawn in a wrong direction"—

"That is not possible. A straight line drawn either perpendicularly, or horizontally, or diagonally, is equally a right line. It can only be changed by being curved."

"And if a curved line would facilitate your approach to the extreme point, would it not be better to proceed by it?"

"The route would be circuitous, and consequently longer. That which can be approached by a curved line, can always be attained more readily by a straight line."

"You are a mathematician, I perceive."

“ If I had chosen the *curved* line, perhaps from politeness I should have agreed with you. As it is, I have only to say, that you are mistaken ;—plain common sense so often wears the semblance of excellent logic, that it is not surprising one sometimes takes one for the other.”

Sir Albert was silent. He attentively observed her countenance. Its complete vacancy surprised, as much as it disappointed him. There was a mechanical action about it, which was as remote as possible from vivacity or animation. There was no play of muscle, no brightening of the eye, no flashes of intellect. In was calm even in motion.

Nevertheless, he pondered frequently on this his first conversation with her. There was a sort of fascination about her, which as he himself

had affirmed, attracted the eye to her, and prevented its ever after losing the sight of her. There was a something uncommon, even peculiar in her manner,—but so distinct from the peculiarity of Catherine Lockhart's!

He was glad, when, after an interval of nearly a week, Mrs. Grafton's absence again afforded him the opportunity of a *tête-à-tête* with Miss Grafton.

She had a book, but it was closed.

"I suppose, Miss Grafton," began Sir Albert, "I must not again entreat you to read."

"If you think it right to do so, of course you will. It will be sufficient for me to decline taking advantage of your politeness."

"Is it not a curious practice to be so minutely scrupulous of right and wrong, in such very trifles as these?"

“ By *curious* you mean to express *ridiculous*. If you consider it so, of course to you it *is* so. It is our own perceptions that must determine for us the nature of our actions. To me it seems that since a multitude of these trifles swell the aggregate of a man's actions, as a combination of atoms composes the universe, it is proper that we should take care to attend to them as much as possible.”

“ You have a *peculiar* manner of considering subjects. You cannot change this word so mischievously as you have done my unfortunate *curious*.”

“ No, but this *peculiar* equally expresses your disapprobation.”

“ Upon my honour, you wrong me,” said Sir Albert.

“ Do not take the trouble to remove this impression. I assure you, I am not in the least disturbed by it.

There would be an end to all dignity, if one were to suffer one's self to be affected by every body who disagrees with one in opinion. I am obliged, however, by your wish to relieve me, when you imagined I was uneasy."

Sir Albert smiled at the *naïveté* which had thus classed him with *every body*. It must be confessed, however, that if he were not *displeased* by it, at least he heard it with no agreeable sensation.

"Perhaps, since I cannot prevail on you to read to yourself, you will do me the favour to permit me to be a partaker of your amusement, and will read aloud."

"Certainly,—if it will oblige you," replied Miss Grafton unhesitatingly.

"Is it possible, that I have mistaken this girl's disposition? That her former *disobligingness* had its source rather in

my own imagination, than in any disinclination on her part?" thought he, and he listened with an attention which nothing—not even a thought of Catherine Lockhart,—disturbed.

That she read *well*, was his first impression,—again, that she read *uncommonly* well,—and lastly, that she read in a manner totally distinct from that of other people, and infinitely superior.

He looked,—where he had so often looked with disappointment,—at her countenance. Immoveable, inexpressive as usual! It was, indeed, turned from him as much as possible not to prevent his distinctly hearing, and her eye-lid was considerably depressed. Once he fancied that a beam so brilliant burst from her eye, as for a moment entirely to change its character. But a second glance con-

vinced him that it was only its own fixed, black brightness.

“ And this excellence is mechanical !” thought he,—“ and after all that I have expected, she has no soul,—no feeling ;—a common-place, unloving and unloved being !”

A note was brought by a servant to Miss Grafton. She opened it immediately, and having read it, put it into the hand of Albert.

“ I am very glad, my dear Miss Grafton, to inform you, that I have returned to my new mansion, because it is in your neighbourhood. This is not a compliment, and you will believe me, because you know me ;—cynics do not flatter. Desire me to come to you as soon as possible, that I may get a little more in charity

with the world again. Nothing can produce such an effect so soon as your society. I say continually to myself, ‘ Je connois à present les hommes; cependant, je ne les hais point, mais je ne saurois les estimer. Je leur veux, et je leur fais du bien sans espoir de recompense.’ — You see, I improve under your tuition, and am now but half a savage. The increasing demoralization of mankind, however, prevents my reforming wholly. London is the grand theatre where all their vices and their follies find space for exertion. You observe I have, by courtesy to you, separated vices and follies into two classes. That is a point, however, which we must still argue. I consider it criminal to throw away time; the follies that dissipate it are the means of this end, and therefore partake of its cri-

minality. We must discuss this subject at large, when we meet.

“ I have returned sooner than I mentioned to you; the reason is obvious. I no where meet with any society which gives me so much pleasure as yours.’ You perceive how selfish a principle regulates our conduct. I long for the time, when our

- ‘ Sermo oritur, non de villis domibusve alienis;
- ‘ Nec male necne Lepos saltet : sed quod magis
ad nos
- ‘ Pertinet, et nescire malum est, agitamus :
‘ utrumne
- ‘ Divitiis homines, an sint virtute beati ;
- ‘ Quidve ad amicitias, usus, rectumne, trahat nos :
- ‘ Et que sit natura boni, summumque quid ejus.’

“ How does Euclid?—I have a very fine edition of Klopstock; I hope the works of this inimitable poet will increase our ardour in the attainment of this fine language. I agree entirely with you in your disapprobation of

Kotzebue. His pathetic periods, and affecting sentiments, engage our feelings completely on the side of the person for whom he wishes to interest us; and by his art in gaining our sensibility and our imagination to his party, he prevents the exercise alike of our reason and our principles. It is safer to listen to him in the closet, than in the theatre. In the latter, all our passions are more forcibly excited. Hurried along by the splendor of the spectacle, we cannot stop to analyse what so forcibly engages our attention, and we retire impressed with the propriety of the emotions which have been excited.

“ I intended only to write a note informing you of my arrival. It is swelled into a letter. You will forgive it, because it is principally your fault. If you were less admirable, I

should have less inclination to address you.

I beg that you will tell sir Albert Beverley, his quondam tutor has purchased a residence in his neighbourhood, and intends personally to renew the intimacy that has so long existed between them, by calling on him at noon to-morrow.

I shall be glad to find your health better. Present my compliments to Mrs. Grafton, and believe that I expect the moment of seeing you with impatience.

I am,

Your's most sincerely,

GEORGE FALCONER.

P.S. Perhaps it would be better that you should show sir Albert this letter. It will save me the trouble of explaining to him the change which

a mischievous elf in your shape, has contributed to effect in me. You have a mind above being affected by what I can say of you, and will not fear being suspected of vanity.

CHAPTER X.

ALBERT read over Doctor Falconer's letter several times. For this man he had always a high veneration. He respected his uncommon talents, and even loved him for his prejudices. The manner in which the doctor addressed Miss Grafton sufficiently indicated his estimation of her talents.

"She is a *learned* woman, perhaps," thought Beverly; and he revolved in his mind all the disagreeable ideas he had formerly entertained against this unfortunate class of females.

"She certainly is not a pedant," he reflected next,—“she is as remote as possible from display;—perhaps excessive pride.”

This idea, once excited, was not easily dissipated; Miss Grafton's coldness, reserve, inflexibility, monotony of manner, were all accounted for by this single word. Perhaps Sir Albert Beverley was not sorry to have his speculations on her character decided so easily.

“Learning and pride,” thought he, “were just the qualities to attract a man of Doctor Falconer's stamp. He would be fascinated by them. I have heard him declaim for hours on the too great facility of women. He dislikes a female who can be approached by every body, and receives the address of each with equal affability. He would not distinguish the power of repelling those who have been attracted from that of not attracting at all. In short, he would not perceive the infinite superiority of Catherine

Lockhart to such a woman as this mathematical Miss Grafton."

And the idea of Catherine Lockhart, once distinctly presented to his mind, dwelt there. He fondly recollected the sort of *imaginative* grace that pervaded her manner. He recalled the haughty vivacity which kept the fancy of every one at play, whilst it made each sensibly feel his own inferiority, and sometimes compelled him to shrink into positive diminutiveness. He remembered the brilliancy of her beauty, the brightness of her countenance, its incessant change, and the contrasted appearances it bore. In fancy, he heard again the accents of her voice; they thrilled to his heart; they smote every nerve; he thought on the pathos with which she had quoted Cramer's description of Klopstock,—and this re-

collection immediately presented to him the form of St. Clair.

At this point began all the mystery that had separated him from Catherine. Her idea, though almost constantly present with him, always brought pain with it, for it was always connected with St. Clair. A thousand suspicions floated in his brain, without his being able to select one as probable. Her evident misery seemed not that of guilt, but of innocence struggling with severe and almost insupportable misfortune. Her vivacity was not of the heart, it sprang from a luxuriant imagination which could not be restrained, but which affected only her manner. Her brilliant genius served but to contrast the deep shade of unhappiness, and the dignity of her uncomplaining sorrow,—the very act of restraining its

appearance, indicated by the contracted brow, and the convulsive agitation of her form,—were ever before him.

The longer he was absent from her, the more his heart was attracted to her. He saw her in every part of nature. He endeavoured to dissipate his attention on a variety of objects ; but it was as if he had broken into a thousand pieces a mirror that reflected an image which he wished to avoid : instead of being obliterated, the reflection was multiplied.

“ This Miss Grafton,” thought he, “ with her rigidity of countenance, resembles a raw recruit, whose features are under the control of discipline, and have been so long accustomed to obey the word of command, ‘ eyes right,’ ‘ eyes left,’ that they are completely drilled to the beat of

the drum!—And I am obliged to endure her society after Catherine Lockhart's!"

A very natural question next suggested itself to him, "what obliged him?"

Now there was no authority in existence that could say to Sir Albert Beverley, "you shall go there," or "you shall remain here." He exulted in the conviction of his own freedom, and he had just arrived at the resolution of returning to Catherine Lockhart,—of demanding from her a solution of the mysteries that disturbed him,—of ascertaining whether that heart were free which he so ardently desired should beat only for him; when Doctor Falconer entered.

"I am heartily glad to see you," said the Doctor, after the first salutation, "and rejoice to find myself

in your neighbourhood. Do not, however, for a moment suppose, that this inducement made me settle here. No;—I am not a man to flatter, and I confess to you that no one but your young ward so much interests me, as that I should consider her society equivalent to all the beauties of prospect and situation to be found at Keswick.”

“ I am glad you have discovered so much attraction in Miss Grafton;—I honour your perseverance and your penetration,” said Sir Albert, in a tone which expressed the irony he used.

“ Don’t be petulant, Sir Albert, don’t be petulant; you know, I am not an admirer of womankind *generally*. I think with Plautus, ‘ qui in amore precipitavit, pejus perit quam qui saxo salit,’ and I believe

that the most exact definition of the character the husband sustains in married life, is given by the sultan who says to the Turkish princess on her nuptials, “ Daughter, I give thee this man for thy slave.” However, the gunner to his linstock, the steersman to his helm. As a *woman*, no woman interests me. As an extraordinary *creature*, I admire Miss Grafton, but I am not come here to speak to you of her or any woman, if you do not wish it.”

“ But just now, my dear Sir, my head is filled with nothing else.”

“ Seriously, and soberly, my dear Sir Albert, are you in love?”

“ Seriously and soberly, then, with my hand on my heart, I answer, *I am.*”

“ You are?—Miss Grafton has it! I knew, she must!—I knew it was

impossible any man could live in the same house with her without being captivated by her!"

"Does my being in love involve, as a necessary conclusion, that Miss Grafton is my object?"

"Certainly, certainly;—you have been living with her, and it is the most natural incident in the world."

"My dear Sir, you mistake;—I am not in love with Miss Grafton."

Doctor Falconer was silent from extreme astonishment.

"I see, you wonder at such an avowal, and believe me our surprise is reciprocal. I am as much amazed at your imagining it for a moment possible, that Miss Grafton is a woman I *could* love, as you *can* be that she is not the woman I *do* love."

"Proceed, sir Albert, proceed."

"No, my dear sir, not until I per-

ceive in you a more favourable disposition towards me than at present. Pardon me, I cannot repress a smile. You are angry that I do not love the woman in whom you have found something to admire!"

"*Something!*—say rather *every thing*—every thing that man ever can admire. Sir, no other woman deserves to be compared to her. And you! you had this gem at your disposal,—you might have secured it, and you basely throw it away for a thing—how far below it!"

Sir Albert knew the Doctor's temper, and he suffered him to proceed without interruption.

"On this point I had placed my happiness! What a fool a man is, when he calculates securely on anything which depends on another's caprice!—'Sir Albert Beverley,' said

I, 'my pupil'—how proud have I been of such a pupil!—but that is all over!—I shall never boast of it again! 'My pupil,' said I, 'by the greatest good fortune imaginable, is thrown into the way of this incomparable girl; this Miss Grafton! I know him; he would certainly be for popping his head into matrimony some of these days, and it is as clear as possible now that he will marry her!'—And all my congratulations were premature and ridiculous!—You are going to throw yourself away on some fine-lady affected woman of fashion, whom *I* shall never notice; *that*, at least, is certain. Zounds! Sir Albert Beverley, tell me candidly, is it not enough to drive a man mad, when he sees his pupil, the very being whose mind he has helped to form, on the high-road to making a fool of himself."

Albert preserved his gravity and his composure ; he sat quietly expecting what was yet to be said, wisely determining to hear the whole before he replied to any part.

Doctor Falconer took snuff, and after a silence of about three minutes' duration, abruptly demanded, " and pray, Sir Albert Beverley, if I may presume to ask the question, who *is* the lady ?"

Beverley was silent.

" I am an impertinent, inquisitive old fellow, I confess. Excuse me, excuse me, people of my stamp have not generally all their wits about them on such occasions as these."

" My dear sir, when you are quite calm enough to hear me, I am ready to tell you all. There is nothing I so much desire as to give you my confidence, and entreat your advice."

“ Well, well, I confess it was ridiculous enough in me to be angry that you have not fallen in love with the woman I expected you would do. Don't, however, expect me to listen in patience to a relation of your love for a being who

“ Nec tamen ante adiit etsi properabat adire,

“ Quam se composuit quam circumspexit amictus,

“ Et finxit vultum, et meruit formosa videri.”

“ It is my *private* opinion, that, as Menander says, ‘ malum est mulier, ‘ sed necessarium malum.’ I do not publicly avouch this, because I believe in such a case the ladies would *limb me*, as the Bacchæ did Orpheus. It has been considered as a refinement of cruelty to tear a man piece-meal with wild horses ; but what was poor Damien's case to that of being demolished by infuriated women ?

There is no more comparison between the two, than there is between being kicked to death by a butterfly, and entangled in the fly wheel of a steam-engine ; between letting the tribute money fall on your toe, and being extinguished by the burthen of Atlas ; between the silent lapse of the sand in the housewife's hour-glass, and the mighty swell of the tempestuous ocean, when ' the labouring bark climbs hills ' Olympus high, and ducks again as ' low as to the fiends ;' between a man's being hustled by a gang of pick-pockets, and a planet's being jostled by a crowd of comets ; between the Lord Mayor's state-carriage and the equipage of Queen Mab ; between—"

" Such a being as you have described I do *not* love," interrupted Sir Albert.

" Nothing," continued the Doctor,

•

“ can give an adequate idea of the fury of these Bacchæ; Ovid labours for it when he says,

“ Sed neque fulvus aper media tam fulvus in irâ
est

“ Fulmineo rapidus dum rotat ore canes

“ Nec leo.”

“ Nothing can give an idea of so terrific a *finale*. There may be a similarity of situation it is true; Hercules, for instance, was at sea in an earthen pitcher, and Nelson in a hundred gun ship; yet each was the captain of his vessel. In short, sir, *admirable* women are as scarce as fine days in January.”

“ Perhaps so,” replied Sir Albert, “ and therefore we should the more highly prize one when we find her.”

“ True, and therefore Miss Grafton—”

“ And therefore Catherine Lock-

hart is precisely the woman I intend to marry."

"CATHERINE LOCKHART!"

Doctor Falconer was silent; his extreme astonishment was visible in every line of his countenance.

"CATHERINE LOCKHART!" he exclaimed a second time.

"My dear sir," said Albert with impatience, "such is the fact. Spare these expressions of surprise. If you know Catherine Lockhart, tell me in what manner you know her; there is much concerning her of which I desire to be informed. She appears to me talented, gifted beyond women in general. There is nothing commonplace, nothing uninteresting about her. It is impossible that the feelings can be tranquil in her presence; one's imagination is constantly excited by her; she steals in the heart by every

possible avenue; there is no resisting her. Beyond all the world, she is captivating and enchanting. Her beauty is, perhaps, her least fascination; certainly it derives its greatest power from the intellect that is visible in her countenance."

"Her haughtiness," — began the Doctor,

"Naturally results from a comparison of herself with the triflers around her. Placed in a circle of intelligent and cultivated people, Catherine Lockhart has an attentive, listening modesty, which is the more attractive, because all the world is aware that she is equal with the choicest spirits there."

"*Modesty!*" said the testy old gentleman, with an expressive frown; "*modesty* is doubtless the probable disposition of a girl like that, — spoiled

by learning, by wit, by beauty, by admiration, in short by every thing that gives to woman the power of tormenting. Sir, I tell you the giving *her* credit for such an attribute, is a proof of as great discernment as the ancients possessed, who assigned the sovereignty of the serener atmosphere to the virago, Juno !”

“ Permit me to observe, sir,” said Albert, “ that I believe I am better acquainted with Catherine Lockhart than you are.”

“ So every lover thinks. Every lover imagines that he knows and understands his object better than any other person. It is natural to a man suffering under your malady. Thank heaven, sir, I can speculate on your complaint with the satisfaction of a physician who prescribes for an

indisposition with which he is totally unacquainted, except in theory."

"Quid est enim temeritate turpius?" said Albert quickly, in the words of Cicero, "aut quid tam temerarium tamque indignum sapientis gravitate atque constantiâ, quam aut falsum sentire, aut, quod non satis explore perceptorum sit et cognitum, sine ullâ dubitatione defendere?"

"Well, come, I allow that it is quite fair," replied the doctor smiling;—"I have recovered my temper; and now let me hear all about yourself and Kate Lockhart, as *connected therewith*."

"Permit me to ask first, what information can *you* give me respecting Miss Lockhart?"

"Very little. I know the family; generally, it is a bad family alto-

gether. The mother, a scheming, forward, dashing woman of quality, studious to repair the ravages of age, by inefficacious arts, and, like the Helen of Euripides, bestowing all her care on that beauty which was her entire occupation in youth.—The son a dissipated, idle, vain, mischievous rake,—a compound of art and vice; boasting even of his faults, and yet, when it serves his purposes, appearing all modesty, and candour and simplicity. The daughter, infinitely too good for such a mother, I allow. It was commonly thought among the ancients, that the quince affords an excellent antidote against poisons. So the strength and purity of Miss Lockhart's mind are, in the circle in which she is placed, an antidote to the horrible looseness and depravity that surround her. She has feeling,

—and imagination, — and genius ;
— but she wants *reason*. — She is
the creature of impulse,—led away
by every specious appearance, and,
discoursing most eloquent ‘ music ’
to any one who will be at the
trouble of touching the chord. When
I knew her, she was devoted to a
Mr. St. Clair ;—their acquaintance
began, I believe, in Italy. — You may
judge what love would be in such a
woman. Sir, it was passion,—en-
thusiasm,—madness. She gave up
her whole soul to it. Every feeling
was absorbed in it. She no longer
esteemed or cared for any other being ;
she seemed to exist but through him.
I have seen them together. I have
witnessed that intense watchfulness
of his least action,—that evident par-
ticipation in his least emotion, which
must be seen to be understood. Soon

after their return to England, St. Clair married another. He forsook this woman, who had had princes at her feet, and rejected them all for him. Catherine Lockhart's mind, I understand, never afterwards regained its usual tone. There is a sort of unhealthy restlessness about her, which approaches nearly to insanity."

"Good God!" interrupted Sir Albert, "what are you saying, sir?"

"The simple truth. She is no longer the same being. There is a bustling sort of vivacity about her which evidently affects only her manner whilst her heart remains deadly cold. I have once heard her laugh since this fatal event occurred. I shall never forget the sensation with which I listened to her. The most piercing scream of agony never imparted to me an idea of half the pain

this laugh expressed. It was so unnatural,—so broken. It contained such bitter derision of self, such despair, such agony. Sir, it seemed the laugh of a maniac.”

“A *maniac!*” exclaimed Sir Albert, in agony; — “a *maniac!* for God’s sake, sir, recall the word.”

“It is fact. I am convinced that her mind was wrought to momentary delirium. Can you not conceive how deeply that misery must sink into the heart, every appearance of which is so carefully repressed? It will drink up the life-blood, sir, and the sufferer will, at last, find the only refuge left to her—the grave.”

“The *grave!* — the *grave!* — oh, Catherine!” sighed Sir Albert,—concealing his head in his folded arms.

“I observed these symptoms,” resumed Doctor Falconer, “soon

after St. Clair's marriage. Since then, I am told, Miss Lockhart more resembles her former self. I firmly believe it, because I am sure it is impossible for any human being to exist long in such a state as she was at that time."

"How long is it since Mr. St. Clair's marriage?" demanded Sir Albert.

"Nearly two years. Since then, Miss Lockhart has constantly met himself and his wife in society, without any symptom of emotion, except, I am informed, that her manner towards Mrs. St. Clair is always marked by peculiar haughtiness. I am not surprised at it. The lady is a compound of inherent vulgarity, acquired affectation, and contemptible meanness. What could possibly in-

fluence St. Clair is a mystery which time alone can develop."

"I cannot wait so tardy a disclosure," said Sir Albert;—"I am resolved to return to Lockhart's. I am pledged not to make proposals to any woman until I have been acquainted with her six months. Three have just elapsed since I first knew Catherine Lockhart. The remaining three shall be occupied in endeavouring to understand her thoroughly, and to penetrate those circumstances apparently inexplicable. St. Clair's desertion could not be occasioned by any diminution of his love for her. I have seen them together, and I have witnessed in *him* the most hopeless passion, and in *her*,—I know not, *I will* not think what I have imagined in her."

“ And you are resolved to prefer this woman to one who, with as much genius, has ten times more power of exerting it!” said the Doctor.

“ My dear sir, love is a sentiment so independant of these considerations! it is impossible to compare, and to analyse, and to decide accordingly as that comparison and that analysis shall result. It is sufficient, that to be loved by Catherine Lockhart I would sacrifice every other hope in existence. In the attainment of such an end, I shall spare no exertions. I shall return immediately to Lady Mary Lockhart’s. I will endeavour to conceal from Catherine the sentiment that animates me. I will observe her accurately.”

“ And if the result of your observations should be a conviction that your case is altogether hopeless”—

Sir Albert sighed as he listened to the suggestion.—“ I will immediately quit England,” said he.

“ Ye gods!—quit your country, because you cannot succeed in gaining the heart of a foolish, romantic woman, from a man who ought to have lost it the moment he proved himself unworthy of it!”—

“ My dear sir, I know in affairs of the heart, that *ought* is so little attended to!”—

“ More shame on them!—Ought one’s principles of moral rectitude ever to be sacrificed? Our rule of right and wrong differs exceedingly, I perceive. Once, indeed, I believed that you would never choose to *succeed* any man in a woman’s affections!”

“ True, most true!—Once I believed so myself. It is only since I have

known Catherine, that I have thought differently. Perhaps,—undoubtedly, I would prefer being the first who had inspired her with love. That now is impossible, I must be content with the good within my reach.”

“ My dear Sir Albert, believe me, you do not understand the good that *is* within your reach—Miss Grafton.”

“ If you desire that I should indeed think well of her, never speak of her after Catherine Lockhart.”

Doctor Falconer shook his head, disdaining to reply.

“ When do you leave us then in this wild-goose chase ?” he demanded, after a short silence.

“ In a few days. To confess the truth, independently of every other consideration, I shall not be extremely sorry to get out of the way of that

tame, impenetrable, silent Miss Grafton."

"Silence imputed to a woman as a crime!" said the Doctor with an air of mingled anger and astonishment.

CHAPTER XI.

SIR Albert Beverley arranged to leave home four days after this conversation with his friend.

On the morning of that day, doctor Falconer again called on him. They went into the library. It was already occupied.

“ Hey-day, Miss Grafton!” said the doctor, “ I wished to talk to you. But of late you have been always employed, when I should be glad to engross your attention for half an hour.”

“ That is your misfortune, not my fault,” replied Miss Grafton, coldly ; “ you come *intempestivo* as great scholars have it.

“ A pedant! — At length I have gained a clue to this incomprehensible !” thought Sir Albert.

“ May I ask what is your present occupation ?” demanded the doctor.

“ I am reading. I will give you a catalogue of my subject, in the words of an author, who enjoyed the greatest celebrity from the time of the publication of his work, during more than half a century, and then for a long period, ‘ *proh pudor!*’ sunk into oblivion. Thanks to the plagiarisms of Messrs. Sterne, &c. &c. its popularity is, at present, restored, and its excellencies are allowed! — I am reading, then, ‘ the ordinary rumours of wars, plagues, fires, inundations, thefts, murders, massacres, meteors, comets, spectrums, prodigies, apparitions, of towns taken, cities besieged in France, Germany,

‘ Turkey, Persia, Poland, &c. daily
‘ musters and preparations, and such
‘ like, which these tempestuous times
‘ afford, battles fought, so many men
‘ slain, monomachies, shipwrecks,
‘ piracies, and sea-fights, peace,
‘ leagues, stratagems, and fresh alarms
‘ —a vast confusion of vows, wishes,
‘ actions, edicts, petitions, law-suits,
‘ pleas, laws, proclamations, com-
‘ plaints, grievances ; — new books,
‘ pamphlets, currantoes, stories, whole
‘ catalogues of volumes of all sorts,
‘ new paradoxes, opinions, schisms,
‘ heresies, controversies in philosophy,
‘ religion, &c. Now come tidings of
‘ weddings, maskings, mummeries, en-
‘ tertainments, jubilees, embassies,
‘ tilts and tournaments, trophies,
‘ triumphs, revels, sports, plays :
‘ then again, as in a new shifted scene,
‘ treasons, cheating, tricks, robberies,

‘ enormous villanies in all kinds, funerals, burials, death of princes, new discoveries, expeditions ; now comical, then tragical matters. To day we hear of new lords and officers created, to-morrow of some great men deposed, and then again of fresh honours conferred : one is let loose, another imprisoned : one purchaseth, another breaketh : he thrives, his neighbour turns bankrupt ; now plenty, then again death and famine ; — one runs, another rides, wrangles, laughs, weeps, &c. &c.’ Envy me the infinite variety.”

“ Bravo!—this tirade is a thousand times better than the simple polysyllable *newspaper*. And then the *variety* !—Oh, how Sir Albert enjoys it,” exclaimed the doctor in rapture.

“ A pedant, verily !” thought Beverley, and he looked again in her face.

Its character was completely changed. The vivacity of its expression harmonized exactly with the excessive rapidity and forcible modulations of her voice. But it was entirely *the animation of manner*. He allowed to himself, for the first time, that her face was decidedly handsome; but it wanted a principal charm,—the play of soul,—of mind. In short this exuberant vivacity was purely *animal*, and had not a single grace which belongs to *intellectual*.

“I envy you, Miss Grafton,” said he, “not so much because you have been enjoying this variety, but because so few accidents appear to have the power of disturbing you.”

“That is true, my dear,” said the doctor; “people jostle against you continually, and yet you are never disturbed.”

“ I proceed with my quotation,” replied Miss Grafton, reclining indolently on the ottoman,—“ amidst the
“ gallantry and misery of the world,
“ jollity, pride, perplexities, and cares,
“ simplicity and villainy, subtlety,
“ knavery, candour and integrity
“ mutually mixt and offering themselves, I rub on, *privus privatus* : as
“ I have still lived, so I now continue,
“ *statu quo prius*, left to a solitary life,
“ and mine own domestic discontents ;
“ saving that sometimes, *ne quid mentiar*, as Diogenes went into the city,
“ and Democritus to the haven, to
“ see fashions, I did, for my recreation now and then walk abroad,
“ look into the world, and could not
“ choose but make some little observation, *non tam sagax observator, ac*
“ *simplex recitator*, not as they did, to
“ scoff and laugh at all, but with a
“ mixed passion :

“ *Bilem sæpe jocum vestri movere tu-*
“ *multus.*”

“ I did sometimes laugh and scoff
“ with Lucian, and satyrically tax
“ with Menippus, and lament with
“ Heraclitus.”

Sir Albert sighed profoundly. It was impossible to detect the source of that sigh, still less of the laugh that immediately broke from Miss Grafton.

Beverley started,—it was such a laugh as had never before smote on his ear,—so *elfish*, so piercing. A hundred mischievous spirits seemed winged on it. Her countenance had again changed. It was as if he had traversed a dark apartment, and in an instant a thousand glittering flambeaux had flashed there. Its sudden irradiation impressed him with a sensation of amazement bordering on

horror. It seemed as if in every lineament,

“ There lurked a still, and dumb-discursive devil,

“ Tempting most cunningly.”—

He endeavoured to shake off the feeling she had inspired, but it clung to him, it fastened on him resistlessly. Magic, the most powerful sorceress, could not have produced a more complete impression. It seemed as if Miss Grafton had the power of Proteus, and could assume at will, forms the most opposite. She had suddenly started from her former self into a new being. The very spirituality, the subtlest essence of intellect, pervaded every feature, every limb. It seemed as if she had all the treasures of the world of imagination in her control, and selected from them what stores she chose, assigning to each

separate grace what situation she pleased. It was as if she had hitherto been clad in the disguise of a coarsely-woven garment, and, on throwing it off, beamed with innumerable brilliant jewels, radiant as the sun. No transformation was more sudden, or produced greater effect. From that moment the mind of Sir Albert never lost the traces of it. It appeared as if in that instant she fixed her hand on him, and never afterwards loosened the pressure ; she gained an unpleasant but irresistible influence over him which he could not shake off.

These sensations succeeded each other with the rapidity of lightning. The revolution of his mind scarcely occupied a momentary space. Miss Grafton, without the pause of more than a second, continued, " I am the

less affected by this jostling of the crowd, as you call it, because I know
‘ there has always existed a secret
‘ and general league of fools against
‘ men of understanding, and of mediocrity against superior talents.’”

“ And this,” thought Beverley;
“ this is the way in which a retentive memory supplies deficiency of intellect, and poverty of idea! What is this quoting but the most detestable plagiarism and pedantry? It is a disgraceful assumption of talents which she does not possess, and of labours and researches which cost her nothing. Oh, Catherine! one spark of thy native and original genius is worth whole volumes of such arrogant pretensions as these!”

It appeared from the countenance of Doctor Falconer, that he thought

very differently; he rubbed his hands, took snuff, and exhibited every appearance of extreme satisfaction.

“That is not a new idea,” said he, “but it is well expressed: this is all we can expect; we know ‘*nihil dictum quod non dictum prius: methodus sola artificem ostendit.*’”

“And that is why I am so seldom affected by admiration,” said Miss Grafton quickly; “it is invention and originality that naturally excite [this sentiment. On this ground we prefer the ancients. So much has already been said on every subject, that what is to be again written, on *that* subject, is rather a combination, or an epitome, of what has formerly appeared, than something before new, and unimagined. When every idea of which a subject is susceptible, has been exhausted in illustration or argument,

we are certain, that for admiration of *genius* we must substitute respect for talent and accurate arrangement."

"True, true,—admirable,—excellent, by Jove!" exclaimed the Doctor; "I know not whom you would choose for your model, but—"

"Oh, the most perfect being I could find, certainly," replied Miss Grafton with vivacity; "to acquire a high point of exaltation, we must always aim at a higher point. The eagle can never reach the sun, but by his towering efforts he acquires a power of flight beyond that of any other bird."

"Inimitable!" exclaimed the Doctor.

"You very generously part with the stores of your mind," said Beverley sarcastically.

"It is not the praise of a man, but of a money-chest, to keep treasure

without diminution," replied Miss Grafton, adopting the idea applied to Aristides by Themistocles.

"This *is* the very galimathias of learning!" thought Beverley.

But Doctor Falconer was every moment more delighted. He drew Miss Grafton "nothing loth," to further exhibition. She talked of the sistrum of the Egyptians, and compared it with modern musical instruments; then she spoke of the Abyssinian *messer cano*, and the war-whoop of the Chippeways; the planetary lyre of Apollo, and the harp of Miriam and David. From music she travelled to costume, because the principal female figure, in the painting that covered the ceiling of the library, wore on her neck a fantastic wreath of roses. She spoke of the roman garlands, formed of roses of

Pæstum, fastened to lindenbark,
Then she spoke of botany, and the
misapplication of the modern term
botanist, by which the Greeks
denoted *weeders* of gardens, and she
expressed a wish that the proper
term *Rizotomous* might become general.
Then she touched on female charms,
and spoke of the thirty points of
beauty ascribed to Helen by Gio-
vanni Nevizano. Then the melody
of the Pentameter verse introduced a
well expressed regret that the works
of Mimnermus, its inventor, whom
Horace prefers to Callimachus, were
lost. This brought Homer into
service, and she panegyrised Lycur-
gus for having been the first to col-
lect his poems into one body. Ly-
curgus introduced Numa, and by a
sort of retrograde motion, Numa led
to Romulus and his credulous fond-

ness for divination. Here she contrived to introduce the idea of a celebrated author,—“in the single art of inventing miracles, modern Rome excels the ancient.”—She spoke of the Scandinavian mythologists,—of their association of marriage and liberty,—their considering the terms synonymous,—and committing the guardianship of both to the goddess Freia. At length having enumerated nearly all the gods in the Pantheon, the classical lady retired, modestly affording her auditors an opportunity of applauding her memory and her reading.

“Well, Sir, well”—began the Doctor, “if you call *this* tameness, and impenetrability, and silence, you and I assign very different significations to the same terms.”

“Miss Grafton bewilders me,”

replied Sir Albert!—"she is not to-day what she was yesterday, and I can by no means calculate on what she will be to-morrow. *Silence!* I know not if the very insipidity of which I formerly complained, be not preferable to this loud and obtrusive pedantry, this exhibition of reading, and parade of learning. I shall never forget the manner in which she has appeared to me to-day. It is impossible to conceal from myself, that she has impressed me in no common degree, and I tell *you*, that that impression is no less unpleasant than forcible. You must have observed that laugh of her's."

"What particular laugh?—She often laughed."

"And is it possible," thought Beverley, "that that sound which pursues me continually, was not dis-

tinguished as peculiar, by the only person who heard it besides myself? Doctor Falconer," he continued aloud, "I cannot like Miss Grafton, she inspires me with feelings of aversion, of which I am ashamed, because they are inexplicable. I cannot impart to your mind, the most remote conception of the idea mine retains of her. That laugh, that horrid laugh, seemed the exultation, of a dæmon, I had nearly said,—at least, of a malicious being who exists only in imagination: its bitter derision, its inexpressible combination of mischief, will never be forgotten by me: it was as if the fiercest spark had been extracted from a hundred meteors, and the amalgama had been made to flash for a moment, and had then been withdrawn for ever. I see that I astonish you. I confess, my pre-

judice appears almost unaccountable to myself. It is sufficient, however, that I am aware of its existence, and of the impossibility of removing it."

"This from you!" said the Doctor; "I shall no longer be a sceptic on any point; I shall no longer refuse assent to the most improbable position! I could not have credited it from other lips than your own. I could not have believed you so much the creature of prejudice and fancy. I could not have imagined that you would have admitted a prepossession against any human being,—above all, against a woman,—because the tone of her laugh happens to displease your ear!"

"It does, I acknowledge, it *does* appear most ridiculous, most contemptible, most unworthy of me. Nevertheless, the fact does exist. No

laugh ever impressed me with such sensations as that; it was so inhuman, so unnatural. I am no fatalist, you know I am not. But I believe there is an original, a native, a forcible antipathy in my nature against Miss Grafton. As the daughter of my father's friend, I would protect her, and befriend her to the utmost of my power, but never willingly will I inhabit, for any long period, the house in which she resides."

"Most strange and unaccountable!" said the Doctor, and there ensued a long and meditative silence in both parties.

"I am now going to Catherine Lockhart," resumed Beverley; "from her, I shall receive happiness or misery. It is not probable that my loss of her will entail eternal hopelessness on me, but at least it will

deprive me of actual felicity. I have made up my mind to the worst. If my admiration, my affection for her, had before been susceptible of increase, the decided contrast Miss Grafton is to her, would have impelled it to its utmost height."

Doctor Falconer was silent.—That afternoon Beverley again quitted his home; if any thing could have driven from his mind the recollection of the scene in the library, it would have been the usual quietude and coldness of Miss Grafton's countenance, which had never been more apparent than at the moment when he made his adieux to herself and her mother.

CHAPTER XII.

TO MISS LOCKHART.

I AM as inexplicable to myself, my friend, as I am impenetrable to you. I scarcely know what end I desire to attain ; I am perfectly convinced only, that it is something absolutely unattainable.

You had drawn a fascinating portrait of Sir Albert Beverley ; I expected something uncommon, something to be admired, venerated, and esteemed. What did I find ? A creature made up of prejudices and fancies,—of common-place sentiments, and vulgar ideas ; one, in short, who comprehends me as little as I desire to be comprehended by him.

You never were so deceived in your appreciation of character, Catherine ; or rather, is it that the material difference which always existed between us, and which we ourselves have so often perceived, operates in this instance also, and affects our perceptions in *such* a point ?

Sir Albert Beverley, [instead of the original of that portrait you have sketched, I find to be a man on whom I could play what strain I pleased, without his detecting that my hand produced the sound. He is not a trifler,—he is not a modern man of fashion,—he is not a smooth, unmeaning courtier. Nevertheless, I am unable to distinguish what he *is*. I know only, that he is not the man whom I could ever love. That part of your letter which interests me most, relates to yourself.

My dearest Catherine,—my chosen friend,—what a course of conduct are you pursuing! You are sacrificing your mind, your energies, your genius, even your life, to a man who, whatever he formerly might have been, became unworthy of you the moment he gave to another that situation which ought to have been your's alone. Do you not remember those lines in *Corneille*?

“ Si nos feux sont egaux, mon exemple l'ordonne,

“ Ou d'être à la Daphnis, ou de n'être à personne.”

It seems to me, Catherine, that in every action of your life, you substitute feeling and imagination for reason, and act on so delusive a theory. It is a fatal mistake. You have loved,—I can imagine how ardently. You were deceived. Is it possible that

this sentiment could continue when you found another preferred to you ? Where was your pride, your dignity, your self-appreciation ? A high-minded woman forgives every thing rather than the preference of an unworthy rival. None could be more offended against than you in this point. The woman preferred to you fell far beneath the most remote comparison. It was degrading, doubly degrading, to be displaced by such a one. It argued so powerfully the worthlessness, the littleness of him whom you had loved. It placed you in the most degrading light, by affording to the world an opportunity of judging you from her who had been preferred to you. And yet you *persist* in loving the man who so abased you ! There is a vast difference between us ! From that moment my heart would have

loathed, would have spurned him. I should have regained full possession of myself, and never again have lost it.

This could not have been a solitary instance of baseness in him. The mind of man does not attain such a pitch of exquisite villany by one step. He must have proceeded gradually,—he must, in fact, have served his apprenticeship to it by a series of minor attempts.

It is for this being that you are weary of life! that you disregard all the beautiful and the sublime in nature and in existence! You cease to value the blessings within your reach, because one means of happiness, which you desired, is withholden from you!

Is this the temper of a philosopher? can we argue wisely on the precariousness of all human good; can

we affect to be convinced of the slightness, the frangibility of the tenure by which we hold all sublunary felicity,—and yet resign ourselves to hopelessness, because we lose a part?

You appear to consider death with the indifference of one, to whom the contemplation has become habitual. Recollect, death is the *penalty* we pay for life. If it had not been peculiarly terrible and severe, would it have been selected as the punishment of man's principal transgression? It is not a little to quit for ever the blooming charities of life, to inhabit the cold, dark, cheerless grave; to lose perception; to know that this wonderful structure will crumble into dust; that the many avenues of felicity formed by our organization are closed for ever; that we are about to enter on a world unknown, which even the most

comprehensive imagination cannot define ; that we shall be no longer susceptible of those affections which constitute so much of our happiness here ; that we shall have arrived at the point where all pursuit must terminate, where the possibility of amendment is withdrawn : these are dreadful considerations, Catherine. I question if our escape from the greatest misery that can oppress mortality, can disperse the terrors of such a prospect !

You suffer : I know it. I can enter into your feelings. You have told me a thousand times that when you loved, the passion became incorporated in your nature ; that your whole system was changed ; that you seemed to have acquired a new existence ; in short, that you lived through St. Clair.—He married !

Oh, Catherine, that one word de-

scribes all your sufferings. His love, his life, his vows were given to *another* ! *another* was publicly selected, the object of his wishes, the hope, the star of his life ! and the world was to point you out deserted and humiliated ! to insult you by its pity, or to revenge itself for the sense of its inferiority to you, by open exultation ! I know your situation in your family ; you were *alone* ; an impassable line separated you from the beings amongst whom you lived. You lost St. Clair, and were desolate !

How I congratulate myself on the possession of your friendship, when I recollect the honest pride which enabled you to assume that appearance of haughty indifference which repelled, at once, the pity and the exultation of the world ! You continued *yourself*,—you put on the sem-

blance of happiness,—and rendered both the one and the other needless. It was a triumph worthy of you.—You deluded the cold, the heartless, the formal, and, above all, *your betrayer*, into a belief of your felicity. A thousand-fold increase of real agony would be amply compensated by this conviction. Whatever you suffer,—whatever torture wrings you,—one thought may elevate your head, and quicken your pulse with joy—“the world knows it not!”

This is a species of enjoyment which will never be mine. In such a case I should have no misery to conceal. The moment of desertion would be the last of love. The man who, for an instant prefers another, *can* be nothing to me.

“Ce corps n'enferme pas une ame si commune;
“Je n'ai jamais souffert qu'elle me fit la loi,
“Et toujours ma fortune a dependu de moi.”

“ L’ame doit se roidir plus elle est menacée,

“ Et contre la fortune, aller tête baissée,

“ La choquer hardiment, et, sans craindre la
“ mort,

“ Se presenter de front à son plus rude effort.”

Dearest Catherine, rouse yourself; think only that St. Clair has married,—that his wife is a woman who drags him from the elevated circle of superior minds, to the level of the mass.—You never loved this man as he really is;—on the contrary, you have been devoted to an imaginary excellence which he does not possess, but which is yet to be found.—Suffer your mind to exert itself, and rise superior to your fortune.

I rejoice in the expected arrival of the chevalier Balermo. I read accounts, in every periodical work, of the progress he has made in his discoveries. I am extremely desirous

of seeing him. Do not suspect that this desire will influence my visit to you. Believe me, no additional motive is wanting, when I have the prospect of seeing you.

As to Lockhart,—*ha il capo a grilli*, as the Italians say; and I think I may defy his utmost ingenuity in the art of tormenting.

Sir Albert will precede my letter. You are still under an injunction of silence.

ELLA GRAFTON.

CHAPTER XIII.

CATHERINE LOCKHART was not changed. She was precisely the same brilliant, restless, beautiful woman that had captivated Sir Albert Beverley.

Daily he became more devoted to her. Her eccentricities ceased to annoy him. He had overcome the first painful emotion they excited; and in the same manner as the eye becomes accustomed to the personal defects continually presented to it, so he ceased to regard them as deformities.

Perhaps even they gave her an additional interest. There was so much apparent carelessness about her; such an indifference to opinion; an

open defiance of the world, and an independence of action peculiar to herself. Yet this position of mind was so totally distinct from any thing *masculine*; it was an intrepidity produced by circumstances, — not the rough offspring of a rude and boisterous nature. Her very levity differed from that of others; sometimes it seemed a mockery of herself; the produce of contempt for the world, and of herself who permitted any thing in *such* a world to affect her. Her wit, in its most playful character, retained the stamp of a despairing heart. Compared with that of people in general, it was the sombre, splendid grandeur of Sicilian amber, contrasted with the flashy gaudiness of the Prussian. The sudden bursts—the *breaks*—in her countenance, were like flashes of lightning over a murky, yet

grand mass of clouds.—Perhaps this peculiarity—this originality—were, in regard to Sir Albert Beverley, her greatest fascination.

His observation of her became every day more minute. He began fully to understand her weaknesses and deficiencies. These rendered her more interesting rather than otherwise; and perhaps such a feeling is natural. It seemed to imply a dependance—a helplessness, which was inexpressibly endearing. Her sense of her own foibles operated forcibly, and appealed continually to his heart. He desired to be her *protector*, and his feelings towards her had more tenderness when he considered his relation to her in that character, than if there had been a perfect equality between them.

Sometimes he deluded himself with

the hope that the former quiet friendliness of her manner to him, no longer existed, and that her reserved and guarded expressions proceeded from dawning partiality. He was mistaken. It had not escaped her penetration, that he attended assiduously to her slightest indications of emotion; and, conscious of the state of her own mind, she carefully evaded his observations.

Once or twice Beverley had introduced the mention of the St. Clairs. He looked at her intently as he did so. He observed the smothered sigh, and the compression of the lips; the sudden trembling of her form, and the deathly paleness of her countenance. But she soon recovered herself, and in the delight of her conversation, he forgot that he had reason to be dissatisfied with her.

Five months had elapsed since the commencement of his acquaintance with her. To the termination of the next, he looked forward with increasing hope. He desired to offer himself unequivocally to her, and to end his uncertainty by her decision. Lockhart evidently exulted in the conviction of Sir Albert's partiality to his sister, and Lady Mary encouraged it by every means in her power.

During the period that had yet to elapse, his attentions to Catherine became more decided. She was not in the habit of analyzing the motive of that which appeared to her merely the result of the intimacy that existed between Sir Albert and her brother. Her conduct to him scarcely ever suffered the slightest variation: it was distinguished by a desire of

enjoying his society, naturally produced by the pleasure an intercourse with a highly cultivated mind must give.

At this period,—so interesting and so important to Beverley,—he was one morning, as usual, seated by Catherine in her boudoir. They were conversing on Italy and Rome particularly, when the entrance of a servant interrupted them.

He brought a note to each. They were cards of invitation from Mr. and Mrs. St. Clair to an entertainment at the petites Thuilleries, which was the name of their residence, in celebration of the anniversary of their wedding day.

Beverley fixed his eyes on Catherine.

Hers were fixed and glassy. There was not a single roseate tint that

dispersed the marble hue of her countenance. Her lips were slightly opened, pale and parched. She appeared to breathe with difficulty. She endeavoured to smile, but it seemed the effort of convulsion.

Sir Albert affected not to notice her agitation. He continued the conversation which the arrival of these cards had interrupted. Catherine's emotion prevented her observing that his sentences were hurried, and interrupted, — and that his thoughts often appeared to wander.

The evening came. It was the ninth of June. The setting of a brilliant sun shed its radiance on the face of nature, as the Lockhart family proceeded to the seat of Mr. St. Clair. Beverley sat directly opposite to

Catherine in the carriage. There was an exuberant vivacity in her manner that pained him even more than composed sadness could have done. Her eyes were unusually brilliant, and the settled bloom of her cheek was evidently artificial.

When Beverley assisted her out of the carriage, he felt her hand tremble exceedingly. Suspicion of the cause prevented his noticing it. A feeling allied to indignation affected him. He was jealous of her sentiments. He desired to possess her confidence. He felt that the person who loves, although he may not be able to secure a return of affection, deserves, at least, this indulgence; he ought to be told the reason that prevents his attaining happiness.

They entered the rooms, and Catherine appeared to have regained composure.

Beverley, notwithstanding his anger, could not but admire the firmness of her step, and the erect and even haughty dignity of her figure. He understood the sentiment of exultation that thrilled through her. She rejoiced in the complete mastery she had gained over her feelings, and she felt her superiority to the beings that fluttered around her, in the invisible line that separated her from them.

To Mrs. St. Clair, her manner was coldly and proudly polite. She declined dancing, and wandered with Sir Albert about the rooms.

The gardens were beautifully decorated as a scene of amusement to those who preferred the coolness of the open air. Many rambled over the singularly magnificent grounds. Beverley accompanied Catherine. The night was delicious. Scarcely a

breath stirred in the heavens, and the mournful notes of the nightingale were sometimes distinguishable above the noise of the revellers. The music from within was improved by the distance, and by the dispersion of the sounds. Every thing conspired to soften the soul. Beverley *was* softened; he looked at Catherine; a tear, a tear trickled down her cheek.

It was the first he had ever seen her shed. It inexpressibly affected him. There wanted but this completely to subdue him. Never had she appeared to him so entirely feminine, a soft, tender, attaching woman. He forgot her eccentricities, her brilliant genius, his own suspicions; he felt only her beauty and her tears.

“Catherine!” he whispered gently, for it seemed to him that the moment

on which his future happiness hung, was arrived.

“Dearest Catherine!”

She started;—he felt her trembling arm as it leaned on his. He himself was powerfully agitated. She appeared desirous of speaking; but the tenderness of his voice unnerved her; perhaps, it awakened recollections; her tears flowed faster.

A gay group, at this instant, rushed from the *porte fenêtrée* of the saloon; they were desirous of dancing in the grounds; Beverley and Catherine were separated by their tumultuous approach. When they had passed, Sir Albert looked around for her. He saw her not. He concluded that the dancers had borne her along with them, and he followed their steps.

The path branched into innumerable directions. He believed they

had taken that nearest him, and it was not until he had traversed it some minutes, that he detected his mistake.

It terminated at a small temple, a miniature of some Grecian model. It was splendidly illuminated, and Sir Albert, lured by the beauty of the building, entered.

The interior corresponded with the elegance of its external appearance. Musical instruments were arranged in different parts of it. Grecian figures, of inimitable workmanship, supported splendid candelabras, which illuminated one part of the edifice, whilst the other was thrown into complete shade. Here various aromatic shrubs were disposed, dispensing delightful perfumes, and from their position imperceptible. A conservatory commenced at this spot.

Beverley was about to enter it. A

voice, he paused; Catherine the next moment was in the temple.

Catherine with St. Clair!—

He lost all power of motion. He leaned against the colonnade. A cold dew burst on his temples. A sudden oppression on his chest threatened suffocation. It is impossible to describe the thousand maddening sensations that rapidly succeeded each other.

“Why do you bring me here?” demanded Catherine; “what would you have? I desire not to listen to you; there *can* be, there *ought* to be, nothing pass between us, that the whole world may not hear.”

St. Clair groaned; Catherine’s emotion was perceptible; she placed her hand on her temple for a moment; she removed it, and continued.—

“Do you wish to revive recollec-

tions—to call remembrance into life—and to bid my memory remind me what a very wretch I am? Listen to me, St. Clair; I forget nothing, nothing; it is two years, two whole years, since you married; and I—I live!”

She clasped her hands, and burst into a horrid, convulsive laugh.

“Yes, yes, this is the very day, that separated us—that placed an eternal bar between us. You gave your vows to another!” she continued, with an unnatural tranquillity of voice. “I remember all this, and yet I am calm. Nothing disturbs me. We will have no scene, St. Clair. It is true, that I planned this place, that I watched the progress of the building, that I celebrated its completion in this very spot here with you. Here, a thousand times has Heaven

heard our vows ; here we projected schemes of future felicity ; here we parted, and have met again—*thus !*”

Her calmness deserted her. She shook in agony, and leaned against the wall for support.

“ *Thus ! — thus !*” — he exclaimed, throwing himself on his knees before her ; “ that I may renew my vows ; that I may swear, never, never, for one moment, has the tortured heart that throbs so wildly *here*, — beat for another than for you ; that I live only because we sometimes meet, because my eye may rest on yours, and read there what to doubt would be distraction : you love me, Catherine ; do not deny it ; you *dare* not ; you *dare* not drive me to madness ; you *dare* not forswear yourself. I *deserve* your love, you know that I deserve it. You know that I have adored you

with a fidelity beyond example. Was it I, Catherine, who made wretches of us both? Was it I, who pronounced the fiat of our separation? Exiled from you, would not I have traversed the wildest deserts on earth, never tracked by the foot of man, and you commanded me to plunge into that gulf which has undone us? Cursed be the hour when I obeyed you!—cursed be the infatuation, the desperate infatuation that subdued me. *I had lost you!* this conviction drowned my reason, and rendered me a passive tool, without thought or reflection. *I had lost you!* you, you, decreed our separation; careless of every thing, I did as you commanded, and we are both undone!”

“Spare me, spare me, St. Clair, dear St. Clair!”

“*Dear St. Clair!*” he repeated,

suddenly rising, and seizing her hands,—the most beautiful hands nature ever formed. “Catherine, beloved Catherine, I ought to be dear to you! *Spare you?* Had you mercy on me? By plunging us into one common ruin, did you not double despair? *Spare you?* Perhaps, I might have the heart to torture you, to heap back on you the weight of misery you have brought on me; but—but—Catherine, what distresses you that I do not feel doubly? *Spare you?* alas! what can I inflict on you, that you do not already feel? Two years have passed away, and during that interval, that long, long interval, we have had no moment worth living for but this, this one, this diamond burning in a sable shroud! But they have brought to us some comfort; yes, we have one mighty consolation!

Catherine, we may defy the malice of fortune, we have lost *all!*"

"ALL!" she repeated, in a voice half stifled by the violence of her emotions.

"No, no, no," he exclaimed with frantic earnestness; "not all! We still love each other, and this conviction is bliss, is rapture. How poor is the relation that woman whom the law calls my wife, bears to me, when compared with the indissoluble, the immortal tie, that unites my soul to your's! We want no vulgar bonds to unite us; you are mine, mine by a thousand vows attested by heaven; mine, by the choice of a heart that disdained to be fettered; mine by an union, such as we may not blush to own through eternity! Catherine, we are innocent; that love cannot be guilty which prevents us from

performing no one duty; we are unfortunate but uncontaminated by one thought we must blush to avow. Catherine, Catherine, if we would wrestle with our sufferings, and our hearts burst in the struggle, are we therefore criminal? No, no; I will not believe it. These wasted forms, these feverish hands meeting now, perhaps for the last time, bear witness for us, that we have struggled! The future, we have nothing to do with the future of this life; it cannot bring an evil on us which the past has not rendered familiar. I wanted to speak with you, Catherine; listen to me with patience; observe, I do not believe it; it must not, cannot be; report—what a vile lying thing the world is! report gives you to Sir Albert Beverley. Be patient; think you I knew you so ill to credit it?

You dare not, it would be sacrilege against the noblest, the purest flame that ever bound mortals to each other. My bonds are example for you; here is nothing to compel you; *you*, at least are free, and there is no power which should forbid your disposing of yourself as you please."

"You overwhelm me, I am faint, the heat is too great. Sir Albert Beverley, noble, excellent, unequalled, is elevated far, far above Catherine Lockhart! And if he did, for a moment, delude himself into the belief that he loved a wretched, inconsistent, half-distracted being like myself, be sure, St. Clair, that I, at least, am guiltless of all endeavour to attract him. No, no, it is sufficient that one of us"—

"Is mad, trammeled, bound, and to *such*—but I will not curse, I will

not! Farewell, Catherine; my friend, my companion, my first, last, only love—farewell!”

He staggered from the temple. Catherine seated herself. She sat with her eyes fixed, in a state of silent agony. Beverley, scarcely less wretched, stood in all the quietude of utter hopelessness. He was affected by sentiments of the most powerful compassion for the unfortunate St. Clair, and for the no less unfortunate Catherine. He did not intrude on her; and when she quitted the temple, he rejoined the party by a route different from that which she had taken.

CHAPTER XIV.

TO MISS LOCKHART.

10th of July.

I KNOW not how to address you, Catherine,—I know not how to convince you of the sincerity of that friendship to which I am about to pledge myself: still less can I discover in what manner I should best relate to you that event, which has given me some claim on your confidence, or that accident which has already afforded half the solution of the mystery which so perceptibly—to me, at least, perceptibly,—hangs over you.

I have loved you, Catherine. There was nothing on earth that I desired but you. I began to value rank and

fortune, because they gave me the means of elevating you. I anticipated the period when I should lay both at your feet with triumph. I thought with extasy on the prospect of affording your genius, your talents a more enlarged sphere of action. Life became dear, because I considered you my future companion through it. In one word, Catherine, I *loved* you.

Let me detail to you, as concisely as I can, those events which have convinced me of the necessity of our separation.

From the commencement of our acquaintance, Catherine, I observed you with no common interest. Independent of every other consideration, your genius rendered you an object of curious speculation. By the constant habit of scrutinizing your actions, and endeavouring to penetrate

their motive, I detected that the veil of levity and indifference which you threw over your manner, was but assumed. I discovered also, that you were not happy.

From this moment my vigilance was redoubled. I looked on all sides to discover the cloud which obscured the brilliancy of your horizon. At length, my eye rested on St. Clair.

I observed you both,—my attention was never diverted from you. I believed that you loved him, and I durst no longer trust myself near you.

During my absence my passion increased. My memory dwelt fondly on your perfections, and very slightly presented to me my former suspicions. A history of your attachment to St. Clair at this time reached my ears. It but increased my pity for your

sufferings, your misfortunes; and if sometimes I was jealous that another had inspired you with that passion which I ardently desired you should feel for me,—perhaps this very jealousy did but increase my love for you.

I returned to you,—I became more devotedly attached to you than ever; sometimes I forgot the existence of St. Clair, or remembered him with indifference.

We were invited to celebrate the anniversary of his marriage.

It is impossible to convey to you, Catherine, any idea of the intenseness with which I watched every motion of your countenance. I saw the ill-suppressed agony that tortured you; I saw your haughty endurance of extreme suffering; and I felt that *he* was beloved.

What a conviction ! It involved the ruin of those delightful plans of future felicity, which I had been so ambitious of realizing : yet I preserved my calmness ; and, *still* calm, I accompanied you to this gala.

I cannot describe—I wish not to recall—the emotions that affected me, when I witnessed your noble endurance of extreme pain. We walked into the garden ; the music, the scene, the stillness of the night, your presence, and more than all, your *tear*, subdued me. I forgot suspicion, St. Clair, and the shade that obscured you,—I saw you only,—beautiful, brilliant, and tender ; I felt that the moment on which hung my destiny, was already in being,—I spoke to you.

Let me dwell on this moment. Notwithstanding the doubt, the suspense,

that were naturally connected with it, it teemed with inexpressible felicity. I spoke to you,—I called you *Catherine*—DEAREST Catherine!

These words must never again be united by me. The sight of them pleases me. You have listened to them from me,—henceforth they are sacred,—dear as the ashes of departed friends.

They had scarcely passed my lips, when the impetus of the rushing crowd separated us. In seeking you again, by a mistake in the path, I strolled to an illuminated temple. Its elegance tempted me to enter. I was pleased with its decorations, and the classic associations which it combined. I approached the conservatory. This part lay in strong shade. I listened,—Catherine, you entered.

I cannot recall what I felt at the

moment when I discovered that you were attended, and by St. Clair! A terrible sensation, resembling madness, chained me to the spot. I saw your emotions—his uncontrollable agony,—I heard the expressions of passion, so long restrained, and now breaking out, in “thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.” I need not recall to *you* what passed there. Such a scene must live in your memory for ever. It will never quit mine.

Jealousy, suspicion, vanished; pity, admiration, surprise, engrossed the place these had hitherto occupied. I could not even conjecture what fatal circumstance had had power to separate two so equally, so devotedly attached. A love so pure, and that contemplated the prospect of an union only beyond the grave, became sacred to me.

Worlds should not have tempted me to aim at occupying that place which belonged to the unfortunate St. Clair. I desired to show myself to you, but I feared to alarm you, without having it in my power to convince you how ardently I desired to alleviate, if possible, your mutual sufferings, by the most disinterested friendship,—the most unaffected participation of them.

Catherine,—once again let me call you *dearest* Catherine,—do you think that I deserve your confidence? do you think that I deserve to be *your* friend, the friend of St. Clair? I shall be far from you, Catherine, when you are called on to answer this question; I shall no longer be tempted to the dangerous indulgence of your society. For the present, I shall leave England:—I would relieve you from the embarrassment which I am convinced

my presence must occasion you. I desire only, that in those moments of distress which *must* be yours, you will remember the existence of Albert Beverley. When you are a little composed, Catherine, recollect that he is awaiting some communication from you, at the ——— hotel, Dover.—Your confidence in him will *console*, at least, the disappointment of dearer hopes.

ALBERT BEVERLEY.

TO SIR ALBERT BEVERLEY.

22nd of July,

You have penetrated my secret!—you have discovered that which I would have hidden from all the world! You know that I am wretched, and that I am continually under the necessity of appearing under a feigned

character!—Is it possible that I support the consciousness of being pitied, not only with patience, but even with gratitude to you who pity me?

Yes, most generous of men! I am grateful to you,—inexpressibly grateful for the invaluable friendship you offer to me; regretting only, that your noble nature ever condescended to love a being who could not return it, whose heart had already been impressed by another.

I cannot believe myself degraded, humbled, debased from my original height, since you have desired to elevate me to yourself. And why should I?—To love with inextinguishable passion a man, not inferior to Sir Albert Beverley himself, is *not*, cannot be humiliating. To conceal that passion from the eyes of the world, because it is unfortunate, and

shrinks from observation, is the result of a sentiment which you at least will not misunderstand.

You desire my confidence, and I yield it to you. Do not think that the delay which has hitherto prevented my noticing your letter, proceeded from a cowardly hesitation. I resolved instantly to trust to you the whole. But I had many papers to arrange, many recollections to recall, many bitter remembrances to dwell on, before I could detail to you all the circumstances connected with myself and St. Clair.

I confess that my task has subdued me. I am not myself. I am agitated and depressed. Suffer me to assure you that I prize your friendship as I value life itself. God bless you, Sir Albert Beverley; wherever you go, you will have the satisfaction of find-

ing amongst the best and most illustrious, none superior to yourself.

CATHERINE LOCKHART.

I have sometimes you wish not
to be the only one of the kind
“THE CONFESSIONS OF CATHERINE.”

Paper the First.

Canova returned from England. This was an event in Rome. In Italy, where the arts flourish as in a native soil, the arrival of this great master was a more triumphant occurrence than the entry of a victorious general. All Rome desired to testify their admiration for this illustrious artist by entertainments, of which he was the avowed object. Hitherto Lady Mary Lockhart had associated principally with those whose chief occupation was pleasure. But at Rome, every nobleman, however dissipated, is a

connoisseur in the fine arts, and an admirer of Canova. Consequently all flocked to his abode, and Lady Mary Lockhart was amongst the number.

I cannot describe the rapture with which I anticipated an introduction to this distinguished man. Of all the arts, *his* had always ^{ex}~~er~~^{ci}ted my highest admiration, I was an enthusiast in every thing; and I contemplated Canova as already half a divinity. I had fancied a hundred apotheoses of him. I cannot express to how high a pitch the mind of a young and inexperienced girl, with habits and dispositions like mine, may be wrought by a feeling of this nature. I was nineteen, and devoted to poetry and romance. Until I went to Italy, I had been educated in a retirement almost monastic. There my imagi-

nation was excited, not by the trite and uninteresting fictions of commonplace authors, but by the narratives of classic writers, and the descriptions of epic poetry. I was introduced to the world at Rome; and human nature appears in a light infinitely imposing when contemplated in the midst of the superb monuments of man's genius and grandeur. Even the modern Romans are more interesting than any other people. They live in the centre of the arts,—in the school where they are the most successfully cultivated,—and their souls seem endowed with a nice tact of discriminating excellence, superior to that of any other nation.

Perhaps the Italians were attracted by me, because I understood their language perfectly. My genius, also, was precisely of that stamp which

they most appreciate. I had a particular facility in the *improvisante*. They had imagined it a talent peculiar to their country, and my possessing it seemed almost to *naturalize* me at Rome. The exertion of it,—listening to, and practising the most delightful airs in the world,—the classic monuments all recalling ideas of glorious events, and recording the triumphs of genius, combined to render me exquisitely susceptible of the pleasures of the imagination, and to increase my sensibility to the highest pitch.

We went to Canova's. I saw the sublime productions of his genius. I conversed with this extraordinary man, and he readily accepted Lady Mary's invitation to her first conversation. She had given innumerable galas, but never before an entertain-

ment of this sort. It is impossible I can describe the feelings with which I awaited the evening;—they were indefinable. It is so different to assemble a crowd of people who can be amused by dancing and mirth, and a select number of persons distinguished and illustrious.

In effect the evening came. They who possess extraordinary talents are frequently the most condescending. Canova brought with him two friends,—the chevalier Balermo and St. Clair.

Paper the Second.

Yes, I saw St. Clair for the first time.—I saw him under circumstances in which any other man would have attracted my attention. He was the

friend of Canova and of the chevalier Balermo. He was introduced to me in this character, and he instantly became interesting to me.

I thought when I commenced this task, that I would relate every event with clearness. — Alas, Sir Albert Beverley, it is impossible! — I break off suddenly, unable to proceed. You will forgive my incoherences. You know what a wretched inconsistent being I am.

I do not think that I was so powerfully impressed by St. Clair this evening as my subsequent attachment to him might lead you to expect. He had great talents; he spoke on a variety of subjects, and was listened to with the applause he merited. I admired him, it is true, but at the same time I admired Canova and the chevalier Balermo, much more, be-

cause fame had fixed her seal on them. If I had never seen St. Clair after this evening, I should not have regretted him, I should not have been wretched:—alas! do I wish that it had been otherwise?—do I desire to exchange those sufferings connected with him, for happiness derived from another?

It is memory that renders this interview so dear to me. It was the moment in which I first knew the existence of St. Clair. It was the commencement of a series of love, passion, which he alone had power to excite in me. It was the step that led to our attachment. Unimportant in itself, when I consider it in this manner, it appears the most interesting moment of my life. Alas! it was certainly the last of my tranquillity!

The manner in which St. Clair had

been introduced, did not authorize his repeating his visit without invitation. Canova was too much engrossed by princes and distinguished characters to visit private individuals frequently. The Chevalier Balermo was less engaged, but St. Clair was not very intimate with him. His manners were polished, and his conversation interesting by the variety of his life. As all our ideas are derived from perceptions of sense, the man who has travelled most, and seen the greatest diversity of objects, acquires an extraordinary ascendancy in society, by the power his mind has of multiplying its reflections. Balermo had this ascendancy in a high degree.

My situation in my own family at this time was particularly unfortunate to me. Lady Mary Lockhart is a woman of fashion, and of the world; in Rome she retained the same cha-

racter as in London. The splendid ruins that attract the attention of the traveller at every step, were admired by her, because the cognoscenti led the fashion, and *they* admired them. Her common-place expressions of admiration restrained always the exhibition of my feelings. I believe, that enthusiasm, like love, is nourished by concealment. I acquired the habit of appearing unaffected by emotion, whilst my heart was swelling with an accumulation of triumph. Perhaps this method of restraint increased the ardour of my nature. I have often longed to pour my feelings into the heart of my companions, but I was deterred by the dread of encountering their apathetic remarks. I was therefore obliged, as it were, to sympathize with myself, and the passion of my nature redoubled.

I wish, Sir Albert, that you should

understand exactly the state of my mind at this period. I would particularize every feeling that increased my susceptibility. It is impossible not to recollect them. Alas, how important have their consequences rendered them to me!—

Paper the Third.

After having declined repeated invitations to Lady Mary Lockhart's, Canova at length found leisure to accept one.

St. Clair accompanied him.

On this evening, the guests were dressed in characters, each strictly classic, without masks. Italy is particularly favourable to this species of entertainment, because situation, memory, the sacred relics of what

has been, combine to render the illusion perfect. The language too, abounding in classical allusions, and its near affinity to the latin, considerably heightens the effect. The delicious softness of the climate is equally appropriate, and gives a charming grace to the glowing beauty of Italian women. A scene such as I witnessed this evening, I had never before imagined. It was so admirably adapted to my enthusiasm and my genius! It was enchantment!—

I chose the character of Aspasia. Canova had a very fine painting of her which he had shown to me, and I arranged my costume by this model. Perhaps this habit was well adapted to my figure, and as I had studied the particular talents which distinguished this remarkable woman, I imitated her with greater accuracy. It was

that genius which drew philosophers and warriors to her feet, that was to be delineated. It would be ridiculous affectation in me to deny that I feel myself the possessor of powers of mind, infinitely above the generality. I exerted them all in supporting the character, and I was applauded.

St. Clair, by some fatality, appeared as Alcibiades. By this name he attached himself to me during the evening. The genius, the fire, the rapturous *enjouissance*, of the Grecian general, could not have found a better delineator. I cannot describe the pleasure with which I listened to his conversation, so admirably adapted to make his auditors forget the present, and to exist, in imagination, amidst the talents, the wisdom, the military glory, and the magnificence of Greece.

I know not how others were affected by the entertainments of the evening. I know only, that it was, perhaps, the most triumphant period of my life. Surrounded by persons who were the admiration of Europe, applauded by them, my talents heightened by that applause, my imagination excited, my enthusiasm increased, followed, addressed, distinguished by St. Clair, I imbibed amidst all that can gratify taste, and elicit genius, the first seeds of that fatal passion, which became, at once, my felicity and my bane.

Paper the Fourth.

A few days after this eventful evening, I was surprised by a visit from Canova himself.

The purpose of it was highly flat-

tering to me. It could not be otherwise. He repeated his approbation of the picturesque grace I had contrived to throw into the character which I had supported, and he requested me to sit as the model of a miniature statue of Aspasia, which he had in contemplation.

After many studies, he at length succeeded in selecting an attitude and a turn of countenance which pleased him. The statue was completed, and he himself told me, that the execution of it exceeded even his hopes.

It was exhibited to all the cognoscenti in Rome. I became known by the appellation of Aspasia only. The fame of Canova shed a beam of its brilliancy on me. Our names were constantly united ; I was a woman—
young—a foreigner—and in each of

these characters interesting. The Italians, so enthusiastically desirous of encouraging the least appearance of talent, sometimes ascribed the merit of this inimitable piece of sculpture to the original from which it was taken. Their courteous extravagance was even encouraged by Canova. He was conscious that it could not diminish his reputation in the slightest degree, whilst it added materially to my consideration, of which, perhaps, he discovered that I was fond.

As nothing else was talked of at Rome, the Duca di —, the earliest patron of Canova, heard of his new statue. The noise it made, perhaps, inspired the desire of possessing it. He contrived that this desire should be hinted to Canova.

Whether Canova designed to pre-

sent it to him, remains unknown. Rome became interested in an extraordinary event. Canova went to Frescati for a few days; many of the nobility witnessed his depositing the *Aspasia* in his cabinet, and his immediate departure. Notwithstanding its apparent security, on his return he discovered that he possessed it no longer.

He affected to consider the loss as trifling. The *cognoscenti* were not of the same opinion. They were indefatigable in their inquiries after it, and were always unsuccessful. The public heard of it no more.

Read in this place, Sir Albert, the parcel of letters which is inclosed in the packet as far as No. 6. They will sufficiently elucidate the progress of my attachment.

LETTER I.

TO ASPASIA.

The statue has disappeared!—Perhaps some divinity, envious that such skill found equal dignity and grace on which to exert itself, is now displaying his stolen treasure to the Olympian synod;—or perhaps, the shade of Aspasia, fearing that her name should be lost in that of her charming substitute, has contrived the theft, and would say, in excuse, as Themistocles did of Miltiades, “*her* trophies will not suffer me to sleep.”

Praxiteles contemplates the theft with calmness, and projects another *chef d'œuvre*. He may prosecute his work with security, for,

unless he chooses the same subject, there will never again be the same temptation. Alcibiades, meanwhile—can you divine, fair Aspasia, what are the feelings of Alcibiades?

I do not think he takes any part in the regret which the *cognoscenti* are displaying on this subject. Is not this extraordinary, because when we consider the devotion with which he regards Aspasia, we suppose that his attachment extends to every-thing that resembles her? How much more, then, to this portrait, which wants only the power of motion to be her very self. Is not this suspicious? And if we reject as improbable the suppositions I before insinuated, on whom shall our conjectures rest?

Perhaps his rank in society shields him from the public expression of

those feelings which, doubtless, are excited against him. Or, perhaps, the generous Italians penetrate the motive, and affect ignorance of the crime. Or, it is possible, that Praxiteles himself contrived the robbery, that he might have the power of obliging his friend.

What are your sentiments on this occasion, charming Aspasia?—Do you incline to agree with me? I hope so. Lest you should not think my allusions perfectly satisfactory, I shall endeavour to ensure your concurrence in them, by a personal conference, if you will permit me the pleasure of seeing you this evening.

ALCIBIADES.

LETTER II.

TO ASPASIA.

During our delightful conversation last evening, I imagined that you pardoned my presumption. When I came to reflect on it, alone, I could not credit the excess of your condescension. I visited my incomparable statue. I had just left you, and I confess this scarcely appeared to me so charming as usual. As I contemplated it, however, I discovered a thousand traits that more forcibly reminded me of you, and in the end, I became perfectly satisfied with it.

I was not so satisfied with my own reflections. I believed that I owed your pardon rather to politeness than a persuasion how much my presumption was to be excused. Whilst I was with you, it was impossible not

to be delighted and content with every thing you wished to impress on me. It is only in your absence, that I discover you might have said more, and have expressed your forgiveness in more satisfactory terms.

Perhaps, at this moment, I am offending by my presumption in addressing you. In truth, I am astonished at my own rashness. After all, I know not whether you can arraign me before a tribunal, whilst you yourself are more criminal. It is the graceful sweetness with which you accepted my apologies, that emboldens me to hazard incurring your displeasure a second time. I am only the tempted,—you the tempter. This will certainly sooth your displeasure, fair Aspasia, if I am so unfortunate as to inspire it.

Fascinated by the enchantment you were pleased to throw over me last

evening, I forgot, in the delight of conversing with you, that I most ardently desired to hear again that music which was so delicious on the evening of your gala. Perhaps, you hesitated to touch your harp because you recollected that Alcibiades introduced the fashion of despising the flute. Remember, beautiful Aspasia, that this sentiment was confined to his own sex alone. Music is doubly charming when produced by a lovely woman,—and she, infinitely more lovely in producing it.

I am astonished at my courage. I find I have really urged the request which it has cost me so much trouble to make. Can you forgive it? It will be difficult to convince me. The only means of doing so are in your power: write and assure me of it.

ALCIBIADES.

LETTER III.

TO ALCIBIADES.

You seem always to dread my anger. I believe, therefore, it would be extremely proper, that I should feel it. Of these nice points of etiquette, I confess my extreme ignorance. You will condescend to remind me when I am wrong; I do not remember that Socrates ever made the *res gestus* the subject of conversation between us.

Perhaps it would be well that we should forget the affair of the statue. Surely a peccadillo of this sort might, if known, somewhat tarnish the glory even of Alcibiades, and implicate Praxiteles in the censure.

This evening the Marchesa di _____ has a conversazione; I cannot there-

fore have the pleasure of seeing you. All the world will be at her palazzo. Your proposal of visiting us, informs me that you do not intend to join her society. Perhaps she will regret your absence.

To-morrow we have no engagement. If you are inclined to sacrifice an hour on trifles, I shall practise on the harp in the evening.

C. L.

LETTER IV.

TO ASPASIA.

The chevalier Balermo has always appeared to me a very elevated character. I think I never observed this more forcibly than last evening, when he suffered himself to be entirely engrossed by our extraordinary and

talented countrywoman. I am not going to argue concerning his taste from such principles. His judgment and discernment were never more highly appreciated by me. He saw that I envied him his seat near you, and he had the politeness to vacate it immediately. He is a delightful character.

The book of which the Marchesa was inquiring, and which you expressed a wish of seeing, I have. I did not choose to say so last night, because etiquette prescribed that I should offer it to *her*, and inclination imperatively dictated that I should present it to *you*. I shall bring it with me this evening. You cannot doubt with what pleasure I accept your invitation.

Why do you employ initials by way of signature? I assure you my

ingenuity was in action some time before I could discover what name belonged to them. I have been accustomed to consider you, so exclusively as Aspasia, that any other appellation appears to me assumed, and I never can annex your idea to it. Whatever you may be in England, in Italy and to me you must always be Aspasia.

I am sure it appears to me that I find a very poor substitute for Alcibiades, in

V. St. C.

LETTER V.

TO ASPASIA.

I dreamed, last night, that the loveliest woman imagination can portray “lapt me in soft lydian airs,”

and wafted my soul on the wings of harmony to Elysium. When I awoke, I saw my beautiful statue, and I recollected immediately all the delightful images fancy had presented to me during my sleep, and the impressions my mind had previously received from realities. I perceived immediately how desirable it is to be within the sphere of a benevolent enchantress, whose power influences even our visions. The imagination once occupied by her image is continually employed in recalling it, and retains its power even in slumber.

Reason may afford excellent causes of enjoyment, but it is imagination alone which presents the means of enjoying. Italy is the spot where this faculty is exercised to its utmost extent. Here it flourishes in its native soil. In England it is an exotic,

which does not thrive in the humid atmosphere. Is not this your opinion? I confess that you are the archimagus of my philosophy, and I desire always to understand your sentiments before I adopt my own.

You spoke to me last night of Mademoiselle Victorine de Bouviers. From what you said, I incline to think, that you imagine I consider her vivacity quite adorable. Is it possible that the penetrating Aspasia has not discovered, that her cheerfulness amuses only because it is unaffected, and that her *bon-mots* would doubtless be very clever and very brilliant, but unfortunately like the swords of the ancient Gauls, they have no *point*?

I am sorry that I am obliged to leave Rome for some days, because I shall lose the pleasure of your society. What increases my misfortune, I can-

not take my inimitable statue with me. It pleases me infinitely more now than it did when I saw it in Canova's apartment. *Then* I visited it in common with all the world; *now* I alone of all the world am certain of its existence. It is so delightful to possess a treasure which no one suspects! I keep it carefully from the profane eyes of the vulgar. The veil that covered the countenance of the prophet of Khorasan, was not more impenetrable.

I anticipate the pleasure of seeing you again with impatience. Absence will at least give me an opportunity of exercising that delightful faculty of the mind, the power of recalling past felicity, and even of heightening it at will.

Adieu, charming Aspasia!—Sometimes imagine that I am with you.

Remember what Cato the Censor used to say, "the soul of a lover lives in the body of another."

ALCIBIADES.

LETTER VI.

TO ASPASIA.

I am delighted again to address you for two reasons: First, because I am always glad of the opportunity of communicating my sentiments to you; and secondly, because it enforces the conviction of my immediate vicinity, and enables me to say *I ill returned*.

I wish this conviction may inspire you with the smallest portion of that pleasure which I receive from it. I find I never estimated exactly the value of your society until I was prevented from enjoying it.

And my absence has been so much longer than I intended ! I wish you may have discovered this, fair Aspasia. Notwithstanding the impatience I have felt during its lapse, I am not sure that I am not repaid by the heightened pleasure I anticipate in seeing you.

Do not, however, imagine that a farther procrastination would be rendered endurable by this reflection. The nearer I am to felicity, the less can I support delay with patience.

Write to me, if it be only a single line. This, however, will not content me unless it expresses,—

“ I shall be glad to see you,”

ALCIBIADES.

Paper the Fifth.

You perceive by these letters, Sir Albert Beverley, in what manner the attachment of St. Clair and myself proceeded in its gradual rise. The lengthened absence of which he speaks, had, in truth, been endured by me with feelings very much resembling *indignation*. I believe, this appeared in my reception of him, and he immediately deprecated my anger by a thousand plausible excuses. I received them, perhaps, with an ill grace; but this *petite brouillerie* produced one effect on which I had not calculated,—it rendered us immediately more intimate.

Afterwards, we were always associated in every party. Farther acquaintance endeared us inexpressi-

bly to each other. Similarity of tastes, of feelings, of pursuits, strengthened the bond. His superior knowledge of the world gave him that ascendancy over me, without which I never could have loved. He became the very sun of my existence.

You have said, Sir Albert Beverley, that “you have observed me with no common interest?” You have therefore discovered the unrestrained enthusiasm of my nature, and you may imagine with what absorbing passion I loved!—

It seemed to me, that St. Clair and I, of all the world, alone existed; that the people who were moving about us, were mere automata affected by certain springs, without any material stake in life. Sometimes, in the height of my madness, I have thought, that to insure *his* felicity,

the sacrifice of the whole world would scarcely be too high a prize. I desired nothing for myself; I would willingly have given my existence, if by that means I could have procure him greater happiness, honour, or eminence. I believe that not one selfish feeling animated me. I loved him to the exclusion of every other sentiment of partiality either for myself or for others. My imagination, genius, energy, passion, were all absorbed by him, to be acted on as he pleased. When he was absent, I wandered about those places which he had visited, regarding even the inanimate objects that had been consecrated by his touch, with fondness; or I sat in the seat he had occupied, absorbed in thought, reflecting on all that had passed when he was with me, until he returned !—

Paper the Sixth.

We had been two years in Italy. I had known St. Clair nearly the whole of that time. I had tasted the exquisite happiness of loving and of being beloved; it was a felicity too perfect to last!

Lockhart had been greatly attracted by a countrywoman of ours, to whom St. Clair alludes in one of his letters. Her sudden departure from Italy, deprived the country of all interest to him, and he ardently desired to return to England.

Lady Mary complied immediately. Neither St. Clair nor myself were pleased with the arrangement. We were delighted with Rome, and we had left no friends at home to regret, or to desire to meet. We submitted

to necessity in silence, and we soon forgot that we had reason to be dissatisfied, for we were still together.

We arrived in England. I still regretted Italy, but St. Clair's society reconciled me to the change. The seat of which he was the actual master, although it in fact belonged to the uncle, whose heir he was, was within a short distance of us. You know it. It is the *petites Thuilleries*.

I cannot recall this period with calmness. I contemplated it as my future residence. The alterations it underwent were completed by my direction. We endeavoured to revive Italy here. The temple—it was in such a temple that St. Clair and I had met in Rome as Alcibiades and Aspasia!—

The letters will explain how all our projects of happiness became empty

air. I cannot trust myself to write of this part of my life. Would that my tears could blot it from memory! How quickly did it chase those delightful visions, which had so long engrossed us!—what a dark reverse!

We had been six short months in England. We had celebrated the completion of the *petites Thuilleries*, in that fated temple. Every thing smiled on us. We loved, oh, how ardently!—St. Clair was summoned to the residence of his uncle.

I refer you to the letters.

LETTER VII.

TO MISS LOCKHART.

I am separated from you!—this thought pursues me everywhere!—I cannot lose sight of it;—I no longer

see you,—no longer speak to you !—The sun rises and sets and rises again, and still you are absent !—How insupportable would this conviction be, if I were not certain of your love !

After having once lived with you, I feel how impossible it is to live without you. It is imagination alone, that renders our separation tolerable. I choose solitude as much as possible, because I would not have my thoughts intruded on. This is not always practicable. My uncle is, at present, confined to his couch, and requires my frequent attendance. Miss Castleton, to whom he is guardian, is also at the Abbey, and I am compelled to endure the ennui of her society. She is terribly common-place ; when the early bloom of youth is fled, we are disgusted with

that inanity of mind, which is endurable only in the extremely young and beautiful. Miss Castleton never was the latter, and she has long ceased to be the former. She has a certain coarseness of feeling, from which I suffer daily all the horrors of purgatory. Mr. Vivian is exceedingly attached to her, and insists that I should be frequently with her.

Why should I talk of her to you?—Perhaps, because I wish you to understand how fondly my memory recurs to you, how lovely is that image which imagination presents to me, when contrasted with Miss Castleton!

I am continually asking myself, when can I return to you, and I calculate, with the minutest accuracy, the probabilities. It must depend entirely on Mr. Vivian.—I owe every-

thing to him, even my Catherine. It was he, who sent me to the continent, —to Italy,—to Aspasia,—*Aspasia!*—what delightful associations are connected with that name!

I imagine I see you in the Temple when the sun sets, watching the shadows of departing day, and thinking on him, whose mind is continually with you. I catch the strains of the Æolian harps, and I hear your voice imitating the sound. We ought to have called our *petites Thuilleries, les champs elysées*.

Write to me immediately. When I read your letters, I shall imagine that I am listening to yourself.

Adieu, dearest Catherine! my heart is with you.

VIVIAN ST. CLAIR.

LETTER VIII.

TO MISS LOCKHART.

I am disturbed and agitated almost beyond endurance. I have much to communicate, and I cannot discover in what manner I ought to tell it.

I informed you in my last, my Catherine, that the ward of my uncle Miss Castleton, was at the Abbey.

I know not,—I cannot imagine,—what infatuation possesses him. He believes her all that is amiable and lovely.—He desires to see her the wife of his nephew !

What answer could I return to a proposal of this nature ?—I was already engaged, and on the point of visiting Mr. Vivian for the purpose of detailing to him the particulars of my engagement, when I received his

summons. I cannot—will not—describe his anger.—That I should reject the heiress of immense wealth, his ward—Miss Castleton—for a comparative stranger, seemed to him incomprehensible!

On these terms only am I to consider myself his heir. He threatens me with every thing that can disturb my felicity. Until I knew you, Catherine, his menaces would have been disregarded.—Now, they involve the destruction of my fondest hopes.

I have represented to him, the *age* of Miss Castleton.—She is three and thirty. A man may love a woman at this, or a much older period, as his wife—his companion from youth, who recalls perpetually the most endearing recollections.—But it is absolutely impossible, that he should

endure a mistress of this age, devoid of all the fascinations of wit and genius, — uninteresting in manner, unlovely in person, especially if he is younger than she is. A woman of three and thirty ought never—never—to hazard every chance of happiness by becoming the wife of a man five years younger than herself.

But what of this?—If she had been all that can fascinate and delight, she must have been nothing to me. The heart that is devoted to Catherine, is too fully occupied to admit any other impression.

Mr. Vivian must dispose of his wealth as he pleases. At the same time, I claim equal authority over my affections. They are devotedly, and exclusively, my Catherine's.

VIVIAN ST. CLAIR.

LETTER IX.

TO MISS LOCKHART.

It is all over. Mr. Vivian died last Thursday. To-day, I am a beggar.

In reading his will, I found that his estates were bequeathed to me, on condition that I married Miss Castleton within three months after his decease. My non-compliance was to put her in immediate possession of this fortune.

I am a beggar then, my Catherine. These estates are her's indisputably. I would rather pioneer for my daily bread than fulfil these detestable conditions.

And the *petites Thuilleries* — that temple so endeared to us by a thousand inexpressible felicities ; those grounds where we have wandered so

often, and projected plans of future happiness—are no longer mine.

Is it possible, my Catherine, that a period so short as this can have effected such complete ruin? — A month since, and you were mine by love—by promise—by a thousand bonds. To-day, we are eternally separated.

I am a beggar. For my very subsistence, I must labour. I cannot even claim a roof to shelter me. Of all my possessions but one is left to me,—I am still the master of myself.

I shall never, never cease to love you. Wherever I go, I shall carry your image with me. I shall be happy when I lose the present in the past,—when I recollect the inestimable proofs of your love.

We must part. The fiat is immutable. Surely one more interview

will not be too much.—Many, many years of subsequent sorrows will require to be soothed by as numerous remembrances of happy hours. That moment in which I see you, even though it be to say *farewell*, cannot be entirely to me, *merable*.

Catherine— and an *loved* Catherine — is it possible y, I resign you—*voluntarily* res— and your? Ah, no!—I am compelled by *passion* to cruel necessity. Is it true that I keep my senses?—that I endure this conviction, and live?

A beggar must not *woo* you, Catherine. But you may smile even on a beggar.

VIVIAN ST. CLAIR.

LETTER X.

TO VIVIAN ST. CLAIR, ESQ.

A beggar! no, St. Clair you are *not* a beggar. Nature never intended you for a beggar. You are the heir of immense ~~day~~ wealth. By a day, we your uncle's rank amongst the chief ~~am~~ a beggar where talents adorn ~~sistence~~ where genius, and energy, and learning, are appreciated.

Marry Miss Castleton. It is I—Catherine—who command you to do so. Do you think I could exist under the conviction, that for me you had sacrificed distinction and rank? that for me you were dependant—a beggar! Never! I must first lose the power of separating the evil from the good. I must become unworthy of your love.

What do you gain by persisting in your refusal? In either case we are separated. If you quit the kingdom, years may elapse before we meet again. And what will console me during that interval? Will it be soothing to me, that you are wandering a beggar and an exile for me? that you are sacrificing your youth, your independance, and your happiness to an unfortunate passion of which I am the object?

Marry;—I am still your friend. No power can prevent my being interested in every thing that relates to you. I shall never cease to love you too well to desire the sacrifice of your happiness to my passion. Recollect, how seldom it is that we can choose felicity in the way we would prefer it. A philosopher and a christian should be grateful for the

good within his reach, without regretting that of which he is deprived.

Miss Castleton must have some amiable qualities. Be it your care to discover them. She may — she will—inspire you with esteem. If perfect happiness is not in your power, you may, at least, be tranquil.

I shall be her friend. I shall have pleasure in teaching her by what manner she may augment your felicity. Your children shall be my children. I shall be the affectionate sister of a beloved brother. All will be well.

Yes, St. Clair, you must marry Miss Castleton. To your habits fortune is absolutely necessary. I have none, and there is but one means by which you can possess it.

CATHERINE LOCKHART.

Paper the Seventh.

I cannot describe, Sir Albert Beverley, the pain, the struggles, I endured before I could write this letter. The blow had been so sudden—so unexpected!—I had one consolation,—only one—I was sacrificing myself to St. Clair's happiness.

He came to me.—I never shall forget his appearance;—so wild,—so disordered, — so changed. I was alone when he entered.

“ Did you write that letter, Catherine ?”

“ Yes, certainly. Did you think I had not courage ?”

I cannot describe this interview.—The most frantic expostulations on his side,—the most unyielding firmness on mine. I am even now asto-

nished at the recollection. I had indeed one powerful support. I was giving St. Clair the most decisive proofs of the sincerity of my passion for him, by sacrificing myself to his felicity.

I know not how I conquered! I remember only, that if I had been pleading for the happiness of my whole life, I could not have supplicated more vehemently. He promised!

He left me.—I know not what strange sentiment of exultation elevated me. I triumphed in a conviction of the immense sacrifice I had made to him. I appeared to have passed into a new and higher state, of existence. I looked on the world around, and something in my innermost heart seemed to say,—“how

superior I am to you all!" Many had sacrificed fortune, friends, country to the being they loved; I had sacrificed even *hope* to him! How mighty, how immense, was the offering!

This was not our last interview. I saw him again and again. I received letters from him. My resolution did not desert me. Energy, of which I had never believed myself the possessor, started into action. I was a new being. The former softness and pliability of my disposition was no more. In place of it I had acquired a firmness and a heroism to which I had hitherto been a stranger. It is true my health was somewhat affected, but I repeated to myself continually, "malgré ses infirmités, une âme *noble*

est maîtresse du corps qu'elle anime."—I was inflexible. I exacted from St. Clair the performance of his promise.—He redeemed his pledge!

Yes, he married! He was indeed bound indissolubly. I heard the bells celebrate his nuptials. I do not believe that his funeral knell would have smitten my heart with such intense agony. It was torture, madness! I hid myself in the most remote spot I could find, and I shrieked his name in all the wildness of delirium. It seemed as if a dreadful weight oppressed my brain, my heart, from which I could not release myself. Around me there was chaos, an insupportable mass of burning light, or worse than Egyptian darkness. I was in a state that defies

alike description and imagination. And yet, Sir Albert Beverley, I lived to recover!

I was deprived of the little happiness on which I had calculated. The wife of St. Clair exhibited a contraction of soul, an incapacity of anything ennobling. She shrunk from my proffered friendship. That despicable class of triflers, who feed the ear with slanderous aspersions of elevated characters, were more consonant to her,—that class whom Blair has so well described: “A tale, perhaps, which the idle have invented, the inquisitive have listened to, and the credulous have propagated, or a real incident which rumour, in carrying it along, has exaggerated and disguised, supplies

them with materials of confident assertion, and decisive judgment. From an action they presently look into the heart, and infer the motive. This supposed motive they conclude to be the ruling principle; and pronounce at once concerning the whole character."

Oh, she knew not what a spirit she raised within me, when she dared to repel my cordiality by the most insulting suspicions! I would have loved, aided, counselled, the wife of St. Clair!—She rejected my friendship—with marked indignity she rejected it! I could not forget, I could not forgive, the bitter pangs her haughty contempt of me inflicted. Yes, Sir Albert Beverley, yes, that person lives who dared to regard me

with *contempt*! She thought not what she was preparing for herself. Proud of having, as she imagined, rendered my lover faithless, she looked on me with the haughty exultation of a triumphant rival!—

“ *She* did not know how pride can stoop,
“ When baffled feelings withering droop ;
“ *She* did not know how hate can burn
“ In hearts once changed from soft to stern ;
“ Nor all the false and fatal zeal,
“ The convert of revenge can feel.”—

Have you not seen how she dreads me, that she avoids my glance as if it were the eye of a basilisk ? She has ambition, and she aims at distinction. She has felt her *nothingness* in the midst of the circle that surrounds me. She does not detect that it is her consciousness of inferiority that oppresses her. She imagines, on the contrary, that my influence has been

exerted to debase her. Such a contest would remind one of the Roman Emperors Hadrian and Trajan, who condescended to engage in trials of strength with the most inexperienced of their soldiers.

One effort on my part would completely have crushed this woman;—she was the wife of St. Clair, and I did not exert my power. I spared her, but she feels, at the same time, that she is indebted to forbearance only. This is a sufficient humiliation.

I am not going to detail to you, Sir Albert Beverley, what is the present state of my mind. You have observed me; and what was formerly obscure, these papers will enable you to penetrate. Of the future of this life I think not. I am now occupied entirely in contemplations of another stage of existence. The world knows

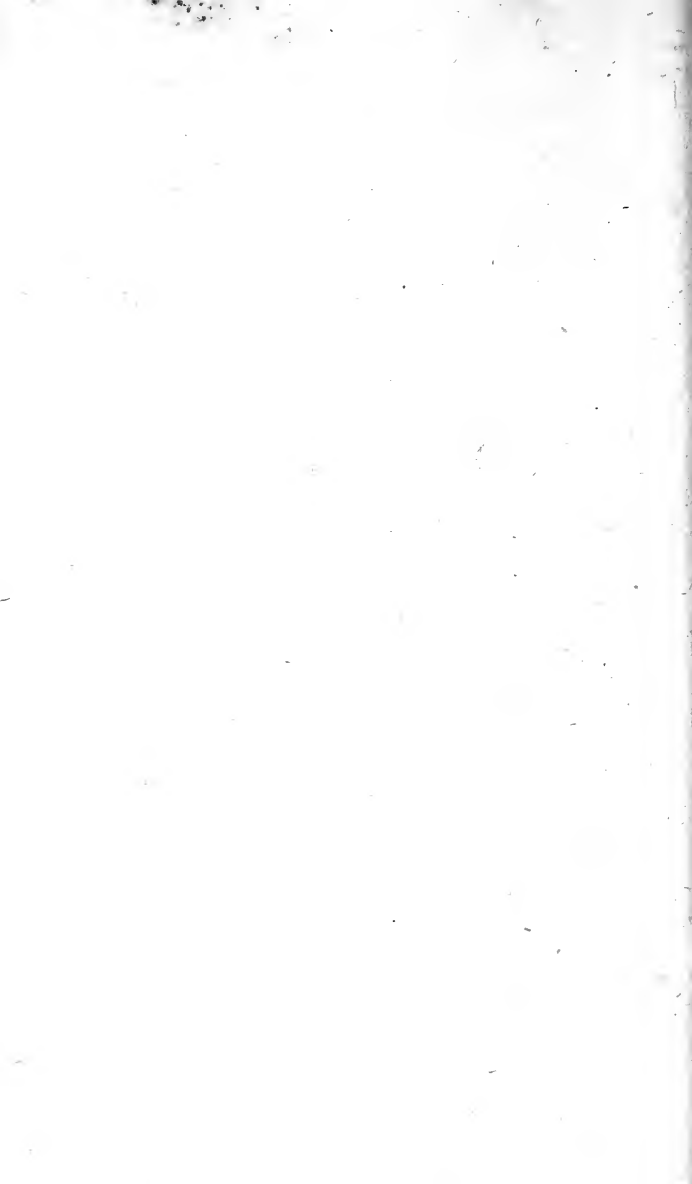
not that I am unhappy, the world suspects it not. It believes that the admired idol of those whom itself most admires, must be an enviable being!—I rejoice that it is thus deceived. And now, come what may,

“ Firm as that flint I face my end,

“ My heart may burst, but cannot bend !”

END OF VOL. I.







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